

AMERICA TO WATCH OVER ISRAEL

AMERICA AS A SUZERAIN POWER over Palestine is one of the prospective results of Armageddon. The entrance of America into the struggle, therefore, would mean much to the Jews, for, as Mr. Norman Hapgood points out, "it influences their prospects in more than one country and changes the whole aspect of affairs in Palestine itself." They are not seeking for themselves a separate and sovereign nation. "What they need is a land in which their people can live and be free to carry out the development of the customs, language, and institutions of the Hebrew race, so that, as the Jews in other countries become more closely adapted to the lands in which they live, they will not feel that they are sacrificing the identity of their race." In addition to this they desire "a home, a center for Jewish interests, a clearing-house for the needs and achievements of the Jews everywhere, that, after three thousand years of dispersal, they may have the standing among other people that comes from a separate national identity. Absolute independence they have never wished, feeling that indeed it would be dangerous, but rather they seek a practical independence under the protection of a strong Power."

England, which looked upon herself as the probable Power to effect these ends for the Jews, now discusses transferring the duty to this country. She sees that she would thus do away with any possible disagreement with France over the disposal of the vilayet of Syria, and also remove a cause of disagreement with Turkey. In the *New York Evening Post*, Mr. Hapgood writes from England on this theme a letter that is quoted extensively in Jewish papers. England's problem with the Turk is put in this way:

"Only after a complete defeat would the Turk consent to surrendering Palestine to the protection of a Power which has been his enemy in the present crisis. The Turk has been on the whole a good friend of the Jews. He has no such prejudice against them as exists in Christian countries. His lack of interest in industry and education has given the Jews a chance to work out their business institutions and their national schools, two of the principal aims in Zionism. But the reasons are more profound than that. The Turk is accustomed to nations within nations. The government of an Oriental is not founded on the same ground-plan as that of a Western Power. As long as subordinate people keep the peace and pay prompt tribute, they are left alone to work out their own salvation. The Turkish idea of law and order does not depend upon localities, but upon groups of people, different laws being applied to different nationalities living in the same place. One of the secrets of the British success in dealing with Orientals is that she has learned this lesson. When the war broke out, the Jews were given their choice of becoming citizens or leaving peacefully. As to be let alone is what the Jews wanted, the Turks have on the whole treated them remarkably well. It will be far better for the Jews already in Palestine if the transfer from Turkish rule can be made to a neutral nation, or at least one not too directly connected with the campaign in the East. The protection of Germany is opposed by the Jews themselves because of her tendency to impress her institutions, especially trade and education, upon those under

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her control. And a German protectorate over Palestine would strengthen the control of the Corridor so dreaded by the Allies.

"If the new Jewish state could be made to include Mesopotamia it would be a great protection to British interests. It would serve as a buffer state between the Bagdad Railway and the Suez Canal. Germany, Russia, or any country bent on aggrandizement would hesitate to force America into a future war by crossing a country under her nominal control.

"Mesopotamia fringes the western frontier of Persia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, thereby controlling the whole of the Bagdad Railway line and protecting India. England has a close interest in that part of Syria lying south of Damascus, since control of that region is necessary to protect the Suez Canal. France has a traditional interest in northern Syria. Milyukov, the Russian liberal leader, has recently declared that France has a right to Coele-syria. He also stated that the future of Palestine lay either in French control or in an international agreement. He said that England's share of the Near East after the war would be Egypt, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, basing part of this contention on the premise that it is England's influence which has supported the recent nationalistic movement which has arisen among the Arabs. The Russians, however, like others probably exaggerate the various little nationalistic movements that have broken out since the war began in various parts of the world. The Italian imperialists are interested in that part of Asia Minor which lies north of Adalia in the direction of Smyrna. The Turks are thus reduced to their ethnological frontiers."

In the event of a Jewish state, the holy places of Palestine would not be included, but would be placed under international or American control. The Holy Sepulcher and the Mosque of Omar would be such places. For—

"Palestine is the Holy Land to all people, to Christians and Moslems, to Catholics and Protestants. Whatever is done, there must be a setting aside of all places holy to others. The Russians make pilgrimages to the Holy Sepulcher, the Crusades were fought for it. Jerusalem stands second to Mekka in the Moslem mind. But the Oriental recognizes extra-territorial rights, governments within governments, and the Jew is essentially Oriental in temperament. He is the natural link between the East and the West, interpreting one to the other and protecting the sacred places of all."

The future of the Jews in countries where they are now persecuted is one of the tough problems to be confronted, as "feeling on all national questions is harder than when the war began. We read:

"The position of the Jews in all countries of the world will be improved if America can be brought to accept a protectorate over Palestine. America is better situated to conduct diplomatic negotiations for a Jewish commonwealth than any other Power because we are not the rivals of any other Power in the Near East. That is why our Government has been able to overcome so many Oriental diplomatic difficulties during the war. . . . The Jews have no desire for too much state power, as they see only danger in it, but they wish freedom to develop."