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The politics of the Balfour Declaration: Nationalism, imperialism and the limits of Zionist-British cooperation

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes a new perspective on the much debated question of why the British government published the Balfour Declaration? It argues that the Declaration was published as part of the struggle that took place in the course of the First World War between two rival factions in the British government on the question of the future of the Ottoman Empire: the “radical” faction that strove to partition the Ottoman Empire as a means to extend the British imperial hold on the Middle East, and the “reformist” faction that opposed this. By promising to turn Palestine into “a national home for the Jewish people” the Declaration advanced the radical agenda of dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and expansion of British imperialism in the Middle East.

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Some fifty years after the publication of the Balfour Declaration, in his book *Cross Roads to Israel: Palestine from Balfour to Bevin* (1965), Christopher Sykes contended that “Nobody knows why the Balfour Declaration was made ... Many reasons have been deduced, too many to allow belief in any single clear one.”¹ Sykes’s assertion reflects the continued difficulty of scholars in indicating “any single clear” reason for the Declaration. And indeed, ever since Leonard Stein’s *The Balfour Declaration* (1961) launched the historical document-based research of the history of the Balfour Declaration, there has been a lively debate between rival schools on the question of what motivated the British government to publish a pro-Zionist declaration at the end of 1917.² The attempt to isolate a “clear reason” for the British decision has yielded numerous studies that expanded the documentary basis and scholarly analysis of the political contexts of that decision and contributed to clarification of many secondary issues. Yet, they too did not resolve the basic problem identified by Sykes: they offered “many reasons” – mainly military, political, diplomatic and propagandist – as a motive for the Balfour Declaration, but no “single clear one.”

Weizmann’s contribution to the publication of the Declaration is another contentious issue in the scholarly discussion. Stein and his successors emphasized that Weizmann played a leading role in initiating and promoting the processes leading to the Declaration, but they proposed differing and contradictory interpretations regarding the source of the clout he acquired in the British administration. On the other hand, in his influential article “The

Balfour Declaration and Its Makers” (1968) Mayir Vereté contended that for considerations of their own, the British would have published the Declaration in any case. Accordingly, “it was not very important what the Zionists did, nor was there any need for Weizmann and [Nahum] Sokolow in particular” to urge them on. Therefore, according to Vereté, contrary to the prevailing “tales and legends,” “it was not Chaim Weizmann who brought the Declaration to the Jewish people.”³ Following Vereté, other scholars, too, rejected the accepted version of Weizmann’s crucial influence over the processes that led to the Declaration, but at the same time they were divided with regard to what, in fact, had motivated the British to issue the Declaration, a division that leaves the question of the “clear reason” for its publication unanswered.

The present article proposes an alternative interpretation both for the factors that informed the decision of the British government to issue the Balfour Declaration and the role played by Weizmann in its publication. Unlike the prevailing readings according to which the Declaration was intended to promote various British interests in the United States, France, Russia, and Turkey, I shall contend that the Declaration was published as part of the struggle taking place in the course of the First World War between two rival factions in the British government on the question of the future of the Ottoman Empire: the “radical” faction that strove to dismantle the Ottoman Empire, partition it, and extend the British imperial hold on the Middle East, and the “reformist” faction that opposed this. The political significance of support for turning Palestine into “a national home for the Jewish people” was the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the expansion of British imperialism, and as such the Balfour Declaration was a means for the radicals to promote their policy and defeat the reformists in this interfactional struggle. I shall further argue that from an early stage in the war, Weizmann identified Zionist interests with the radical agenda, embraced it, and joined the radicals in promoting it. This combination of simultaneously being a Zionist leader and a British statesman explains the prominent role he played in the political maneuvers leading up to the publication of the Balfour Declaration.

The interfactional struggle in Great Britain over the Middle East question

There is scholarly consensus that in the first two and a half years of the First World War, up to early 1917, the Zionists’ efforts to persuade the British government to support their aims in Palestine did not bear fruit. There is further agreement that the beginnings of the turn-about that led to the Balfour Declaration were in December 1916, following the dismissal of Prime Minister Herbert Henry Asquith, who was replaced by his political opponent and rival for the leadership of the Liberal Party, David Lloyd George. Lloyd George instigated a transformation in British policy in the Middle East, one of whose outcomes would be the publication of the Balfour Declaration.

The struggle between Asquith and Lloyd George reflected a deep divide which split the upper echelons of the British government in the course of the First World War into two rival factions that were at odds over the question of the goals of the war, the way it should be conducted, and the outlines of the desired peace agreements and territorial arrangements that would follow it.⁴ In light of the nature of the changes that both factions sought to bring about in the Middle East, in the present article the faction headed by Asquith will be referred to as the “reformist,” whereas that led by Lloyd George will be called the “radical” faction, definitions that characterize the origins of the dispute between the two men even

before the war.⁵ The interfactional struggle first emerged over the question of the theater of war in which the British war effort should be invested. The radical faction contended that in view of the stalemate on the Western Front, Britain should strive to decide the war by opening a second front against the Ottoman Empire in the east, whereas the reformist faction held that since the war would be decided in the west in any case, Britain should continue concentrating its efforts there. The strategic dispute between the “Easterners” and “Westerners” led to a fierce debate on the British war aims: whether to strive for a military defeat of the Ottoman Empire as the radical faction claimed, or whether Britain should attempt to remove it from the war by diplomatic means, as the reformist faction held. These opposing goals derived from a more fundamental disagreement on the question of the territorial and political arrangements that should be instituted in the Middle East after the war. The radical faction sought to dissolve the Ottoman Empire and partition it, dividing it between the Entente Powers, as a means of consolidating Britain’s imperial hold in the Middle East, whereas the reformist faction sought to preserve the Ottoman Empire’s territorial integrity while instituting reform of the existing regime and administration.⁶ There was, then, a political continuum in the opposing positions taken by the two rival factions on the Middle East issues that were on the agenda in the course of the war: division of the Middle East into colonial spheres of influence was conditional upon dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, avoiding a “peace without victory” and continuation of the war until its military defeat. This policy required the opening of a second front in the Middle East and the conquest of Ottoman territories, and vice versa. In this sense the Balfour Declaration obviously reflected the radical policy: it acknowledged that Britain was acting toward partition of the Ottoman Empire, and its publication was intended to thwart the reformists’ efforts to end the war with a treaty that would preserve Ottoman territorial integrity.

Asquith and his foreign secretary, Edward Grey, perceived the preservation of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire as a basic principle of their policy during the war. While they warned that should Turkey join Germany this would necessarily lead to its partition, they continued, however, to support the preservation of its integrity even after Turkey declared war on the Entente Powers in November 1914. And indeed, until Asquith’s dismissal at the end of 1916, official British policy continued to reject dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.⁷

Similar to other issues connected with the future of the Middle East, the questions of Britain’s attitude toward Zionism in general and of publication of a British declaration of support for its goals in Palestine in particular were a bone of contention between the radical and reformist factions. Whereas Lloyd George and the radicals perceived realization of the Zionists’ aspirations as a means of advancing dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and extending British imperialism to Palestine, the reformists rejected such a linkage. Therefore, so long as he remained prime minister, Asquith blocked any pro-Zionist decision, realizing that its significance and implications would obstruct the reformist policy of preserving the integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

Support of Zionism was likewise supposed to assist the radicals in circumventing the opposition of US President Woodrow Wilson to partition of the Ottoman Empire. Since Wilson recognized the right of the various “small nations” in Europe to self-determination, the radicals felt that they would be able to overcome his opposition to their imperialist policy by disguising it as support for the establishment of Jewish, Arab, and Armenian nation-states under the aegis of the Entente Powers. To promote this policy, once they came to power at

the end of 1916, the radicals instigated relations with Weizmann and his Zionist supporters, which matured in less than a year into the Balfour Declaration.

Weizmann formulated his version of the Zionist war aims while the dispute between the reformists and radicals was heightening. At the beginning of 1915, not only did Weizmann espouse radical policy, he also contributed to the formulation of its strategic and economic premises and acted to persuade British politicians and opinion leaders to support it. Weizmann's definition of the preconditions and goals of the Zionists' war aims – establishment of a British protectorate in Palestine that would enable the Jews to develop into a nation in its own right⁸ – was, then, congruent with the radical agenda in the entire gamut of military and diplomatic issues that were in dispute between the radical and the reformist factions. In this way, Weizmann combined Zionist aspirations with radical policies and acted toward their mutual realization as both a Zionist leader and a British statesman. Therefore, whereas Weizmann's positions engendered opposition among the reformists, they formed a basis for close cooperation with the radical leadership that eventually led to the Balfour Declaration.

The key issue in the history of the Balfour Declaration is, therefore, the significance and implications of the reciprocal relations between the radical policy led by Lloyd George and the Zionist policy promoted by Weizmann.

Weizmann, the Rothschilds, and the radical faction

Weizmann espoused the radicals' positions in the winter of 1914–15, following the advice of Baron Edmond de Rothschild, who persuaded him that it would only be possible to attain Zionist aims within the political framework preached by the radicals. In the course of the war, Weizmann gained the support of many Rothschild family members in France and Britain who actively supported his Zionist agenda, which they considered to be a means to advance radical policy.⁹ Thus, in his emergence from Zionist lobbyist to British statesman, Weizmann turned his connections with the Rothschilds from a personal relationship into a vital political asset. Inspired by the Rothschilds, he acted to shape radical policy in accordance with the goals of Zionism, just as he adapted Zionist goals to radical premises, a combination that culminated in the formulation of a “Zionist-radical” policy.

The cooperation between Weizmann and Baron de Rothschild was forged in the course of 1914 as part of the efforts to establish a Hebrew university in Jerusalem, and it further deepened during the war. In August 1914, when on his way back to Britain from a vacation cut short by the outbreak of the war, Weizmann met the Baron in Paris and discussed the expected effects of the war on the Zionist movement.¹⁰ At this stage the Baron had not yet formulated his policy on Palestine, and in his view, “everything must remain suspended at this crisis.”¹¹ He therefore recommended that in the meantime Weizmann take action in Britain to enlist in-principle support for the Zionist idea, and wait and see how matters would develop in the course of the war.

Weizmann took the Baron's advice and until the end of 1914 the question of Palestine gained only a secondary place on his Zionist agenda. In September, he rejected the idea of instigating an organized effort to promote “Zionist propaganda,” a move that in his view was “too early because of the unsettled situation.”¹² In mid-October he was skeptical about the possibility of discussing “our Zionist affairs at this time, during this terrible crisis” and cautioned that action at present might compromise “our work for the future.”¹³ He even

stated that the Zionists must “be patient, fight ourselves or help in any way we can” while at the same time they must also ready themselves for “the moment when the decision becomes tangible.”¹⁴ With regard to Palestine, too, Weizmann’s demands were limited at this stage, and in November 1914 he considered freedom of settlement without “political demands or a Jewish state”¹⁵ as a sufficient Zionist minimum program.¹⁶

Turkey’s entry into the war and Asquith’s statement on November 9, 1914, that this heralded the end of its rule in Asia brought about a change in Weizmann’s diplomatic priorities and placed the future of Palestine at the top of his agenda. He wrote to Ahad Ha’am – a prominent Zionist ideologue – that “we should emerge from our torpor and do something.”¹⁷ The change in Weizmann’s Zionist priorities attested to his lack of orientation in the maze of British politics. Jehuda Reinharz emphasized that Weizmann could not have known that Asquith’s speech was “not much more than momentary rhetoric. During the first half of the war, the British government had no intention of dismembering the Ottoman Empire,” and unaware of Asquith’s reformist views, the Zionists took his speech “at its face value.”¹⁸ By contrast, as part of the British ruling elite, the Rothschilds were aware of the interfactional rivalry that split the government, and came down on the side of Lloyd George and the radicals.

The Rothschilds’ support of the radicals was not self-evident. Ever since the Crimean War the Rothschilds had adopted a paradoxical policy in the struggle that was waged among the European powers on the future of the Ottoman Empire. On the one hand, they displayed deep skepticism regarding the durability of the Ottoman regime. Moreover, as Niall Ferguson states, since 1882 they had “benefited directly from the British occupation of Egypt,”¹⁹ and accordingly they were mindful of the business opportunities and financial profit inherent in partition of the Ottoman Empire into spheres of colonial influence. On the other hand, they consistently opposed partition proposals that were occasionally aired on the European diplomatic agenda, due to what they considered as their negative effects on the inter-power alliance system,²⁰ and eventually supported the status quo as the lesser of the two evils. This complexity was revealed in Baron de Rothschild’s position, whose attitude toward partition of Turkey was based, according to Simon Schama, on an assessment of “the endurance of Ottoman power.” Before the war the Baron had thought that “[s]o long as Turkey remained master of the Levant,” then any attempt “to constitute a separate Jewish nationality” and any plan to establish “a Jewish political entity” in Palestine was utopian and would disrupt the possibility of “quiet immigration and settlement” there.²¹ Turkey’s decision to join the Central Powers led to a turnabout in the Baron’s position. In his opinion, the entente between Britain, France, and Russia against Turkey created “an unprecedented combination in modern times,”²² in the wake of which “the partition of the Empire was likely to be on any war-aims agenda”²³ and therefore the Jews should exploit this situation. After identifying an opportunity to dissolve the Ottoman Empire in a way that suited Rothschild interests, the Baron acted to recruit Weizmann and the Zionist leaders close to him into the ranks of the radical faction.

The Rothschilds’ new policy on the Ottoman Empire fell into line with the turnabout that had taken place at the beginning of the war in the views on Zionism of the first Lord Rothschild, known as “Natty.” Since Herzl’s time, Natty’s attitude toward Zionism had been characterized by hostile reservation. Weizmann maintained that this attitude reflected Natty’s basic alienation from the Jewish masses and that “he was only concerned with the impregnable position he and his family had achieved in Great Britain and had neither

sympathy for, nor understanding of his persecuted brethren.”²⁴ On the other hand, Miriam Rothschild, Natty’s niece, argued that he not only considered Zionism to be “totally impracticable,” but also thought that it would make the settlers in Palestine the target of the Turkish government’s ire and endanger their lives, and would serve as “a blue print for getting the settlers’ throats cut by the Turks.”²⁵ However, in January 1915, some two months before his death, Natty revised his views. Ferguson noted that the turnabout in his position “had as much to do with British imperialism as with Zionism,” and Miriam Rothschild also mentioned that Natty thought that “the probability of a British victory in the Middle East added an entirely new dimension to the Zionist dream. Now it could become a reality.”²⁶ This revision was later given expression in the radical positions of his son Walter – the “Dear Lord Rothschild” to whom the Balfour Declaration is addressed – and who hereinafter is referred to as “Rothschild.”²⁷

In the early days of the war a turnabout also took place in the Rothschilds’ relations with Lloyd George. In the decade prior to the war, Natty and Lloyd George were on opposite sides of the political and ideological divide and were the symbols of rival social worldviews and policies in Britain. In 1909 Natty voiced his opposition to Lloyd George’s “People’s Budget” – which in many respects marked the inception of the British welfare state – and presented it as a danger to private property, economic stability, and the country’s wellbeing, whereas Lloyd George responded with venomous counter-propaganda that presented Natty as the incarnation of the plutocratic power that thwarted every social reform in Britain.²⁸ The outbreak of the First World War placed relations between the two men on a new footing. In the course of July 1914, the Rothschilds led a vigorous campaign in the City in support of British neutrality, but following the German invasion of Belgium in August they changed their position and joined the supporters of the war.²⁹ In the wake of the financial crisis that beset Britain with the outbreak of the hostilities, Lloyd George, who served then as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, invited Natty to take part in consultations at the Treasury on how best to deal with the emergency, and at their conclusion he noted that “only the old Jew made sense.” Similarly, Natty’s brothers and partners, Leopold and Alfred de Rothschild, expressed their “very great appreciation of the most successful manner” with which Lloyd George “dealt with a difficulty quite unparalleled in the history of the finances of this Country.”³⁰ In the course of 1915, with the coalescence of the radical faction, ties between the Rothschilds and Lloyd George became closer: Charles de Rothschild – Natty’s son who had succeeded his father as a senior partner in the bank, and who, along with his wife Rozsika, was of great assistance to Weizmann – offered his services to the Ministry of Munitions established by Lloyd George, and was duly appointed its chief financial advisor; likewise, his brother Alfred also became one of Lloyd George’s followers.³¹

Following their increasing cooperation with Lloyd George, at the end of 1914 the Rothschilds acted to enlist Weizmann, and through him the Zionist movement, in support of the radicals’ policy of dissolution and partition of the Ottoman Empire. At the end of November, while on a two-day leave from the army, James de Rothschild – the Baron’s son – sought an urgent meeting with Weizmann.³² At the meeting on November 25, 1914, James set out before Weizmann the way in which the Zionists could integrate their agenda of a “Jewish State” in Palestine with the radicals’ politics. According to Weizmann,

[James] thought that the Palestinian aspirations of the Jews will find a very favourable response in Government circles, which would support a project like that, both from a humanitarian and an English political point of view. The formation of a strong Jewish community in Palestine

would be considered as a valuable political asset. He therefore thought that the demands which only amount to asking for an encouragement of colonisation of Jews in Palestine are too modest and would not appeal sufficiently strongly to Statesmen. One should ask for something which is more than that and which tends towards the formation of a Jewish State.³³

James's recommendation that the Zionists should not stop at the demand for settlement of Jews in Palestine, but radicalize their demands for a Jewish state, reflected the political contrast between the reformists, who were prepared to support settlement of Jews in Palestine as part of the reorganization of the Ottoman Empire, and the radicals, who viewed a Jewish state as a means of partitioning it. Although James contended that the demand for a Jewish state would help in gaining the British statesmen's support, in view of Asquith's and Grey's opposition to this demand, it seems that the inaccuracy if not the misleading tenor of James's advice was meant to enlist Weizmann, and through him the Zionist movement, to assist the radicals and Lloyd George.

At the time, James's recommendation ran counter to the political line taken by Weizmann, according to the Baron's initial August advice, and he was in no hurry to adopt it. As mentioned above, on November 6, 1914, Weizmann still did not regard "a demand for a Jewish State as an indispensable feature of the Zionist programme."³⁴ Similarly, on December 10, 1914, Herbert Samuel remarked that his own proposals for British support for the Zionists' goals in Palestine were "more ambitious" than those presented to him by Weizmann.³⁵ At this stage, Samuel supported the establishment of a "Jewish state" in Palestine under British auspices, and even submitted a proposal to this effect to the cabinet, which was rejected.³⁶ Therefore, it may be inferred from Samuel's remark that Weizmann refrained from addressing this possibility to which James had referred. Furthermore, at his meeting with future Foreign Secretary Arthur James Balfour on December 12, 1914, Weizmann only raised ideological issues touching upon anti-Semitism, Jewish nationalism, and Zionism, and even replied in the negative to Balfour's question as to whether he "wanted anything practical at present."³⁷ A possible explanation for Weizmann's ignoring James's advice can be found in the summary of their talk, according to which Weizmann was to consult the Baron in order to "ask for his guidance" on the question of relations between the Zionists and the Jewish leaderships in the West.³⁸ And indeed, in a letter from this period to Dorothy de Rothschild – James's wife and the Baron's daughter-in-law – Weizmann noted that "no decisive action would be entered upon without consulting Baron Edmond and without informing her, and, if possible, her husband of it."³⁹

About a month after his meeting with James, on December 28, 1914, Weizmann met the Baron in Paris for "long conferences" at which, he said, they "went carefully over all the facts and considered the situation and the tactics."⁴⁰ On the political content of the meeting we can learn from details Weizmann provided in three of his letters.⁴¹ In one to his wife Vera, dated December 29, 1914, he wrote: "The Baron was magnificent. He is ready to go the whole hog. We talked for five hours, in two sessions. He wants a *State*, nothing less. Details I'd better tell you personally, as they are difficult to pass on, but the essence you know."⁴² Weizmann referred to this meeting again in another letter to Vera, dated December 31, 1914: "It is difficult to describe in detail the meeting with the Baron. We talked for several hours; he is of the opinion that only the Zionists should be relied upon; that to them alone it has fallen to achieve something. He will support them in every way, with his authority and his money."⁴³ An explanation of the Baron's words that "to them alone it has fallen to achieve something" can be found in his letter to an Anglo-Jewish activist dated January 7, 1915, in

which Weizmann mentions that the Baron “thinks that the Zionists, and the Zionists alone, are capable of handling the present situation, and he is willing to give us his full support.”⁴⁴

The details of the meeting provided by Weizmann are congruent with the political direction that had already been indicated by James. The Baron’s suggestion that the Zionists should demand “a Jewish State,” and his promise that he would lend them his full support to that end, as he indeed did, demonstrate his intention of enlisting the Zionists’ aid in promoting radical policy. It emerges, then, that already at the end of 1914, following their political and business considerations, the Rothschilds had identified the war as an opportunity to dissolve the Ottoman Empire, and they recruited Weizmann to lead the enlistment of the Zionist movement as a means for the realization of this policy. The radical faction would espouse this approach to Zionism in the first months of 1915, but put it to use only in the course of 1917. The Rothschilds, then, identified the advantages that the radicals would gain from supporting Zionism early on, and were the first to combine the two. This combination blurred the difference between radicalism and Zionism in the Rothschilds’ activities on the one hand, and those of Weizmann on the other, but it did not annul it. The Rothschilds were first and foremost radicals, whereas Weizmann was first and foremost a Zionist. This difference was to bear little significance in the course of the war, but was to be of importance after it.

Relations between Weizmann and Lloyd George were initiated by Charles P. Scott, editor of the *Manchester Guardian*, “the leading liberal newspaper,” as Weizmann put it.⁴⁵ Scott first met Weizmann in September 1914 and, as Lloyd George’s “closest political confidant,” he displayed interest in the political possibilities inherent in Zionism. After he introduced Weizmann to Lloyd George, Scott ensured that contact was maintained between them throughout the war.⁴⁶ Weizmann’s first meeting with Lloyd George – who, as the senior radical statesman had already declared in November 1914 that he was “very keen to see a Jewish State established”⁴⁷ – took place on January 15, 1915, and according to Weizmann, “an atmosphere was created which warmed and encouraged me.”⁴⁸ The radical agenda was the basis of the close political relationship that developed between the two men and was an important factor in their joint effort that led up to the Balfour Declaration. This radical consent served additional aims as well: at the beginning of 1915 while Edouard de Rothschild, head of the French house, worked to resolve a dispute over war loans between the finance ministers of Britain, Russia, and France, the Baron asked Weizmann to convey to Lloyd George a message presumably regarding a possible compromise.⁴⁹

Between January and March 1915, in the wake of Turkey’s joining the Central Powers and the reshaping of British policy in the Middle East, the controversy between the reformist and radical factions became clearer and the divide more acute. During this period Weizmann was exposed to the intricacies of British politics with the help of Samuel who, as a cabinet minister, elucidated for him the logic of the interfactional dispute that split the Liberal Party, and the effect of the opposing approaches on their attitude toward Zionism.⁵⁰ As a consequence of the insights he gained, Weizmann changed his modus operandi, and in the first half of 1915 he focused his efforts on promoting radical ideas among British statesmen and leaders of public opinion to a far greater extent than enlisting support for Zionism per se. Attesting to Weizmann’s becoming a radical propagandist are his own words in a letter to Scott, dated February 16, 1915, in which he states “[o]f course I cannot claim to be unbiased, but I am trying as much as possible to detach my mind from the Jewish interest, and place myself on a purely English point of view.”⁵¹

In his contacts with Weizmann, Scott repeatedly raised the reservations prevalent in various Liberal Party circles concerning an “undesirable extension of military responsibility,”⁵² and the inadvisability of “establishing a British Protectorate over Palestine.”⁵³ In response, Weizmann stressed the benefits inherent in such a protectorate “from a political and strategical point of view” and pointed to Zionist settlement in Palestine as a solution for Scott’s concerns about enlarging Britain’s imperial commitments:

One has to assume, that, at least, for the next 25 years we may not have any wars. Great Britain would therefore only have to protect the country from incursions of Arabs, and for this purpose a Militia could be organised from the Colonists; in fact one of the immigration laws could be that preference is given to people who have passed military service, and it would be a fairly easy matter for the Jews to entertain and equip an efficient force, which, under British leadership, would be sufficiently strong to keep in check any raiders on Palestinian soil. We would, of course, pay for it. We could go even further and create a nucleus of something which may become a Fleet in time to come. We have got sufficient material out of which we can do it, and I don’t think we would be short of money. If we are given a chance to develop under British auspices we would become a well organised community after 25 years, which could hold its own, not only against the Nomadic tribes round Palestine, but even against a European invader.⁵⁴

Weizmann developed this concept further in another letter to Scott written about a month later, in which he proposed a model for the British protectorate in Palestine, which would be

something similar to the state of affairs which existed in Egypt, viz. The Jews take over the country; the whole burden of organisation falls on them, but for the next ten or fifteen years they work under temporary British protectorate ... If the British Government would accept such a view, it would not be difficult for us to prepare and to present the required guarantees, both in form of means and men. We would be guided entirely in this matter by the demands which the Government may make.⁵⁵

Weizmann’s proposal that Britain adopt, in Palestine, the protectorate model it had established in Egypt demonstrates the linkage of the Zionist-radical concept he had developed with British imperialism. The recurring emphasis in his letters to Scott was more on expansion of the British Empire than on realization of the Zionist idea. Weizmann actually took Scott’s support of Zionism as guaranteed and leveraged it to overcome his reservations on the price of imperialism. Weizmann accordingly contended that in view of the expected contribution of the Jews – “both in form of means and men” – in reducing the British costs in Palestine, “it is difficult to see what are in point of fact the Imperial responsibilities which would prevent the creation of a British protectorate.”⁵⁶

Scott’s reservations regarding the notion of a British protectorate in Palestine expressed the concerns of a growing school in the Liberal Party which, in the decade before the war, had opposed expansion of Britain’s imperial commitments. Weizmann, who viewed a British protectorate as a vital condition for the realization of Zionism, was concerned about the increasing influence of this school, and in a letter to Dorothy de Rothschild in February 1915 he emphasized that according to Samuel, “there is a body of liberal opinion of which Scott and Bryce are the most prominent representatives which would view with disfavour a British Protectorate over Palestine.” Therefore, Weizmann stated, “[i]t is obvious that we must be able to satisfy the public opinion of English Liberals” which “[t]he present cabinet depends upon.” He indicated an additional direction for action, as well: “It is essential to enlist the support of the Conservatives as they no doubt would not raise the same objections being imperialists.”⁵⁷

Following the Rothschilds, then, from late December 1914 Weizmann defined the Zionists' war aims in a way that was congruent with the coalescing positions of the radicals: making Palestine a British protectorate that would allow Jewish settlement. However, Weizmann not only espoused radical positions but also contributed substantially to their formulation. His contention that with Jewish financial backing Zionist settlement was likely to serve as a colonial border guard in the service of British imperialism enabled anti-imperialist liberals like Scott to become radicals. Weizmann squared the circle for these hesitant radicals: he pointed out a way of expanding the British foothold in the Middle East without increasing the cost of imperial commitments at the same time. In this way, Weizmann's efforts to gain the support of British statesmen and opinion leaders for the aims of Zionism were simultaneously an effort to enlist their support for the goals of the radical faction, just as support for Zionism became one of the foundations on which the radicals based their policy.⁵⁸

Weizmann's activity as one of the radical policymakers cemented his relations with Lloyd George and his supporters, but it blocked access for him and his Zionist followers to the reformist government headed by Asquith and Grey. Therefore, until Asquith's dismissal and replacement by Lloyd George in December 1916, Weizmann and the Zionist-radicals had no influence over the shaping of British policy in the Middle East and Palestine. Furthermore, during this period the British government repeatedly considered the option of supporting Zionism as a means of anti-German propaganda in Russia and the United States. To that end it initiated contact with various Jewish and Zionist leaders, but ignored Weizmann and his followers. Stein emphasized that "from the spring of 1915 until somewhere near the end of 1916 Weizmann was absorbed in his scientific work, and his Zionist interests ... had to be fitted in with his prior obligations to the Government."⁵⁹ It seems, however, that the reduction in "his Zionist interests" at this time was not the result of his scientific commitments, but of reformist control over British policy. And indeed, after Lloyd George instigated the radical turnabout in the British Middle Eastern policy in early 1917, Weizmann easily surmounted the time limitations imposed by his scientific work and devoted himself to advancing the Zionist-radical agenda.

A distinction should therefore be drawn between three discrete periods in Weizmann's political activity in the course of the First World War: the first, between the outbreak of the war in the summer of 1914 and spring 1915, a period during which he espoused radical views and assisted in their formulation into a political program; the second, between the summer of 1915 and Asquith's dismissal at the end of 1916, in which, despite the personal prestige he gained as a result of his scientific contribution to the British war effort, his radical positions made him irrelevant to the reformist decision makers; and the third, following Lloyd George's appointment as prime minister at the end of 1916, a period in which as a radical statesman Weizmann became an active partner in the making of British radical policy in the Middle East, one of the outcomes of which was the Balfour Declaration.

Zionist activity under the Lloyd George government

After the formation of the Lloyd George government, the adaptation of British policy to the radical premises was placed in the hands of Sir Mark Sykes, a Conservative MP who was considered to be "almost our greatest authority on Turks and Arabs."⁶⁰ Once Turkey joined the Central Powers, Sykes, from being opposed to dissolution of the Ottoman Empire,

became a supporter of radical policy and tried to advance it both within the British government and through negotiations with France that had been terminated with the Sykes-Picot Agreement. As a bitter critic of Asquith and reformist policy, Sykes's political ties with Lloyd George became closer in the course of the war, and after he became prime minister, Lloyd George promoted Sykes to the post of political secretary to the War Cabinet, with responsibility for Middle East affairs.⁶¹

In 1916–17 Sykes was one of the architects of the radical strategy that used the support of the national aspirations of the Armenians, the Arabs, and the Jews as a pretext for dissolving the Ottoman Empire and as camouflage for advancing British imperialism in the Middle East. The logic of this radical policy was to use President Wilson's recognition of the Balkan nations' right to self-determination – namely, freedom from Ottoman rule – in order to overcome his opposition to the implementation of this same policy in the Middle East. Thus, by supporting Zionist aspirations in Palestine, the radicals strove to compel Wilson to expand his policy regarding the “small nations” from the European regions of the Ottoman Empire to its Asian territories.⁶²

In the summer of 1916, as the man in charge of Middle East affairs at the Secretariat of the Committee for Imperial Defence, Sykes sought to establish contact with representatives of the Zionist movement. In this he was aided by Samuel – who in early 1916 had made him aware of the potential inherent in British-Zionist cooperation – and who referred him to Rabbi Moses Gaster, rabbi of London's Sephardic community and Weizmann's rival in the British Zionist leadership.⁶³ After Sykes held several meetings with Gaster in the summer of 1916, he started to wonder whether the rabbi actually represented the Zionists, and in January 1917 he sought to establish contact with the “real leaders of the Zionist movement.”⁶⁴ It seems that Sykes's doubts about Gaster actually arose in January 1917 due to the new avenue that had opened up for radical policy with Lloyd George's appointment to the premiership in December 1916. Gaster held clear reformist views: according to Weizmann he was “so furiously anti-Russian that he appeared almost pro-German,” and he felt that the Zionists' contacts with the British “were pointless” in view of “England's dark prospects in the war.”⁶⁵ Consequently, Gaster opposed exclusive British rule in Palestine, preferred joint British-German rule over the possibility of British-French rule, and warned that the Zionists should not pin their hopes solely on Britain, which, he emphasized, would be a “dangerous game.”⁶⁶ What Sykes could possibly infer from Gaster's position was therefore that in contrast with radical policy, the Zionists wished that the war should end with an agreement with the Central Powers.

Until the change of government at the end of 1916, reformist positions, like those of Gaster, were the only possible basis for British-Zionist cooperation. However, the radical turnabout in British policy had wiped out the political prospects of the negotiations with Gaster. On the other hand, in the autumn of 1916 Sykes met with Aaron Aaronson – a prominent botanist and a leader of a pro-British espionage underground in Palestine – who pointed to the possibilities inherent in cooperation with radical-oriented Zionists.⁶⁷ It therefore seems that more than simply being interested in the question of who “the real leaders of the Zionist movement” were, Sykes was seeking contact with Zionist-radicals.

In his attempts to locate Zionist-radical leaders, Sykes sought the assistance of James Malcolm, a British businessman of Armenian extraction. In early 1916 Malcolm was appointed by the Armenian Catholicos as one of the five members of the Russian-inspired Armenian National Delegation that acted toward establishing a Russian protectorate in

“Greater Armenia,” i.e., the Armenian territories under Ottoman rule, as a means of resolving the Armenian national problem. These aims, which fell into line with radical policy, formed the basis for close cooperation between Malcolm and Sykes, who was in charge of Britain’s policy on Armenia, as well. Sykes exploited the Armenians’ national demands as justification for dissolving the Ottoman Empire and supported annexation of parts of Ottoman Armenia by Russia.⁶⁸ At Sykes’s request, Malcolm initiated a meeting with Leopold Greenberg, a Zionist leader and editor of the *Jewish Chronicle*, with whom he had been in contact since the outbreak of the war. Malcolm asked Greenberg who “the real leaders of the Zionist movement in England” were, and in reply Greenberg – who apparently understood that Malcolm meant leaders of Zionist-radical orientation – gave him the names of Nahum Sokolow – who was “the supreme Zionist authority” in England⁶⁹ – and of Weizmann. At the end of January 1917 Sykes met with Sokolow and Weizmann on several occasions, to examine the prospects of British-Zionist cooperation, and on February 7, 1917, he met with a large group of Zionist leaders, in the wake of which Sykes recruited the Zionist-radicals to the radicals’ effort. The ongoing cooperation that was established between them ultimately led to the publication of the Balfour Declaration.⁷⁰

Sykes’s approach to the Zionist-radical leadership in early 1917 led to a major transformation in Weizmann’s political standing. From the outbreak of the war until Asquith’s fall, it was Weizmann who sought paths to British statesmen and officials to request their aid, but his efforts were blocked due to his radical positions. Now, it was Sykes who approached Weizmann and Sokolow and requested their assistance to advance radical aims. The co-opting of Weizmann and the Zionist-radicals into Lloyd George’s administration transformed them from lobbyists into partners, and Sykes used their help to promote three major goals of the radical policy: the fight against Wilson’s “peace without victory” policy; the establishment of “Greater Armenia” as a Russian protectorate that included Turkish Armenia; and the replacement of joint British-French rule in Palestine, in the spirit of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, with an exclusive British protectorate.

The struggle against Wilson’s policy occupied a central place in Sykes’s approach to the Zionist-radicals. This was revealed in Malcolm’s memoirs, which reflect the radical perception of American-British relations in the winter of 1916–17.⁷¹ From mid-1916 – about a year before the United States entered the war – tension had repeatedly risen between Lloyd George and Wilson as a result of their opposing policies on the question of the war aims of the Entente Powers and the nature of the desired peace arrangements.⁷² As a radical, Lloyd George strove to end the war with a military victory, not a political agreement, so that it would be possible to force upon the Central Powers a “Carthaginian peace,” such as that eventually dictated to Germany at the end of the war in the Treaty of Versailles, and to Turkey in the Treaty of Sèvres. Accordingly, Lloyd George wanted the United States to join the Entente Powers not only for its military and economic contribution, but also in order to reduce Wilson’s diplomatic leverage and curtail his ability to mediate between the belligerents and impose a “peace without victory” on them. By contrast, Wilson saw American neutrality as a means of exerting pressure on the belligerents to end the war through negotiation, similar to the position adopted by the reformist faction in Britain toward Turkey. And indeed, in mid-1916 Wilson intensified his efforts to achieve a “peace of compromise,” whereas Lloyd George demanded that the war continue until its end in a “knockout,” and attacked Wilson for attempting to prevent a British victory. In December 1916, at the same time that German peace feelers were being sent out, Wilson embarked on

yet another mediation initiative with the demand for “peace without victory.” Lloyd George, who in the meantime had become prime minister, was determined to foil Wilson’s initiative. At the same time, however, Lloyd George feared American reprisals due to Britain’s increasing economic dependence on the United States. In internal consultations, Lloyd George contended that Wilson’s peace policy was a fulfillment of an election promise he had given to “pro-German Jews” who had contributed to his campaign, and therefore, he argued, the Jews were also the key to changing his policy. In this context the notion of using the Zionists to influence Wilson’s Jewish supporters arose among the radicals.⁷³

The mood among the radical faction in January 1917 is demonstrated in an entry in Scott’s diary, which reports on a conversation with Weizmann on January 27, 1917, the day after his first meeting with Malcolm:

Saw Weizmann in morning about Palestine question ... Very important to obtain American Jews’ support. It would be unanimous if they could be assured that in the event of British occupation of Palestine the Zionist Scheme would be considered favourably. Now was the moment for pressing the matter when British troops were actually on Palestinian soil.⁷⁴

Sykes’s negotiations with the Zionists therefore appear to be a translation of Scott’s radical reflections into practical politics.

The main issue for which Sykes worked to enlist the Zionist-radicals’ assistance – a British protectorate in Palestine – was raised at the meeting at Gaster’s home on February 7, 1917. Without revealing the existence of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, Sykes pointed out that in order to turn Palestine into a British protectorate, the Zionists must persuade the French government of its necessity, and asked them to appoint a representative to this end. Gaster viewed himself as the perfect candidate for this mission, but for internal Zionist reasons Weizmann preferred Sokolow. Weizmann’s preference may have been informed by several factors,⁷⁵ the more plausible one of which was Gaster’s blatantly reformist views. It therefore seems that by preferring Sokolow, Weizmann’s aim was to change the composition of the Zionist leadership in Britain in order to make it more likely to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by the nascent cooperation with Lloyd George’s radical administration.

Sykes enlisted Weizmann and Sokolow and the Zionist-radicals in general in order to advance two avenues of action: the first, advancing pro-British propaganda in the Entente countries,⁷⁶ and the second, aiding the radical struggle against the reformist trends in Britain and the United States. Thus, Weizmann and Sokolow became a *de facto* part of Lloyd George’s administration. The ramifications of this development were symbolically expressed in the permission they were given to use British diplomatic and military communication channels, which made their contacts with Zionist leaders worldwide much easier but which at the same time gave the British access to the content of internal Zionist correspondence.⁷⁷ Weizmann’s new status was clearly evident in the frequency of his contacts with senior government officials and ministers such as Foreign Secretary Balfour and Prime Minister Lloyd George, with whom he met on several occasions in March and April, either socially or at initiated political meetings,⁷⁸ a frequency that highlights his disconnect from Asquith’s reformist government. Reinharz noted that “as he intensified his contacts with other senior officials as well as leading ministers in the war cabinet,” Weizmann began “to take a more daring and aggressive attitude in his diplomacy.”⁷⁹ This transformation reflected the change in Weizmann’s status: until the radical turnabout in early 1917, his Zionist-radical activity focused on lobbying efforts whose influence on British policy in the Middle East was

insignificant; whereas since then, as part of the Lloyd George administration, he was part of the radical effort to establish a British protectorate in Palestine.⁸⁰

The Morgenthau Mission

The first months of the Lloyd George government were a period of achievement for the radicals, who turned dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and annexation of Palestine and Mesopotamia into official British policy.⁸¹ Accordingly, in early April 1917 Lloyd George instructed Sykes to commence the annexation of Palestine as a British protectorate and conveyed “that nothing should be done to prejudice the Zionist Movement and the possibility of its development under British auspices.”⁸²

In April 1917 the United States joined the Entente Powers and entered the war against Germany while continuing to preserve mutual neutrality with Turkey. Ostensibly, this neutrality was supposed to render redundant the propaganda benefits the radicals hoped to reap from their relations with the Zionists, but in fact, radical-Zionist cooperation gained momentum after April 1917 as part of the struggle against the reformist policy promoted by Wilson. And indeed, in the summer of 1917, in the wake of Wilson’s growing influence, the radicals’ series of achievements was halted. As a consequence of American-Turkish neutrality, Wilson increased his efforts to bring the war with the Ottoman Empire to an end by peaceful means, and he therefore opposed any breach of its territorial integrity in Asia.⁸³ Unlike Wilson, Lloyd George made peace contacts with Turkey conditional on the demand that “Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are to be detached from the present Turkish Empire,”⁸⁴ as Weizmann put it. Lloyd George’s radical policy also ran counter to the reformist position of his foreign secretary, Balfour, and Isaiah Friedman noted that “Lloyd George was conducting his own foreign policy ... though it contrasted sharply with that of the Foreign Office.”⁸⁵

Thus, in the summer of 1917, parallel to Balfour’s reformist peace initiatives, Lloyd George considered the option of a separate peace with Turkey on the radicals’ terms. With arms dealer Basil Zaharoff acting as his go-between, Lloyd George offered top Turkish government officials high bribes in return for removing Turkey from the war, on the condition of retaining partial integrity of the Ottoman Empire: Armenia and Syria would enjoy autonomy; Iraq and Palestine would become British protectorates; the other Arab regions would gain independence. Lloyd George had put forward, in fact, a proposal for partial partition of the Ottoman Empire that would address the demands of the British radicals at the expense of the other Entente Powers.⁸⁶

The peace negotiations held separately by Lloyd George and by Balfour with the Turks in summer 1917 had failed. At the same time, in mid-1917, Wilson advanced reformist initiatives of his own, the most notable of which was the Morgenthau Mission to discuss a peace agreement between Turkey and the Entente Powers. In response, the radicals dispatched Weizmann, as Britain’s delegate, to a conference held in Gibraltar with the Americans and the French, in order to thwart Morgenthau’s mission. Weizmann’s appointment clearly attests to his senior position in the inner radical power structure, as well as to the Zionist-radicals’ inclusion in Lloyd George’s administration.

Henry Morgenthau Sr. was one of the leaders of the New York Jewish community and one of Wilson’s major campaign contributors. In 1913 Wilson appointed him to the post of US ambassador to Turkey, but recalled him in February 1916 to help with fundraising for his

second-term election campaign.⁸⁷ In the spring of 1917 Morgenthau suggested to Wilson's senior advisor, Colonel Edward M. House, that he go to Switzerland and use his contacts with the heads of the Ottoman government to advance an agreement to end the war with Turkey. House accepted the idea, and Wilson approved the mission, which he believed would serve his reformist policy. On the other hand, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, who held radical views, was doubtful about the chances of Morgenthau's mission.⁸⁸

Balfour learned of the intention to dispatch Morgenthau to negotiate peace with the Turks when he was in the United States in the spring of 1917, and in accordance with his reformist position he responded to the idea positively. He also told House that the Turks were putting out feelers to test the possibility of a separate peace, and argued that there should be willingness for concessions should Turkey and Austria be prepared to sever their ties with Germany.⁸⁹ Balfour's approach reflected not only his support for a separate peace with Turkey, but also his desire for British-American cooperation in shaping the postwar Middle East by means of an "Anglo-American Protectorate over Palestine."⁹⁰

Balfour's reformist opposition challenged Lloyd George's radical policy, but at the same time, the foreign minister was careful not to confront the prime minister directly. This duality was manifested in a meeting between Weizmann and Balfour on March 22, 1917, at which Weizmann examined Balfour's attitude to radical-Zionism.⁹¹ The talk digressed from the Zionist context to defining the limits of the radical hegemony and the prospects of the reformist opposition under Lloyd George. Weizmann noted that at this meeting "for the first time we had a serious talk on practical questions connected with Palestine. He gave me a good opening to put before him the importance of P. from a British point [of] view, an aspect, which was apparently new to him."⁹² In a letter to Scott, Weizmann also emphasized that "Mr. Balfour did not at first see the importance of the Zionist claim from the British point of view; I think I succeeded in explaining that to him." As in his meetings with Scott in early 1915, Weizmann tried to moderate Balfour's opposition to radical policy through Zionism, but it seems that in contrast with his assessments he failed in this attempt. As a substitute for British Palestine, Balfour proposed "to bring in the Americans and have an Anglo-American Protectorate over Palestine,"⁹³ which in view of Wilson's policy meant a protectorate in the framework of the Ottoman Empire and as part of the structural reform of its regime. Balfour continued to adhere to this position both during his visit to the United States in May 1917 and later, in June, at the start of the discussions on the declaration that would come to bear his name.⁹⁴ Even if, as Weizmann noted, Balfour "was not very familiar" with the "practical aspect" regarding Palestine, he was totally aware of the political significance of Weizmann's position. And indeed, Balfour noted that Lloyd George "took a view which was identical" with the one presented by Weizmann, and suggested that Weizmann meet with him.⁹⁵ In light of Balfour's reformist policy, his suggestion can be interpreted as a signal that he would not act to promote Weizmann's ideas.

Weizmann first learned of Morgenthau's mission "early in June"⁹⁶ in a telegram he received from Justice Louis Brandeis, apparently after the latter had met with Lansing on June 5, 1917.⁹⁷ Brandeis was an American Zionist leader and one of Wilson's confidants who had espoused Weizmann's struggle for British Palestine,⁹⁸ and he was therefore concerned about the reformist implications of Morgenthau's mission. In order not to alienate Wilson, Brandeis avoided openly opposing Morgenthau's mission and acted toward thwarting it indirectly, *inter alia*, through Weizmann. On June 8, 1917, Weizmann got another warning about Morgenthau's mission from Malcolm. Malcolm had received this information from

Arshag Shmavonian, an Armenian-Turkish lawyer who had served as a legal counsel at the US embassy in Constantinople during Morgenthau's ambassadorship there, and later continued as his intermediary with Turkish government officials, and in that capacity was seconded by Morgenthau to the American delegation.⁹⁹

As expected, Morgenthau's mission roused opposition from Weizmann and Malcolm who feared its reformist outcomes, as Weizmann was to record in his autobiography, *Trial and Error*: "There was, I thought, the possibility that the negotiations might be conducted on the basis of an integral Turkey, leaving the Jews, the Arabs and the Armenians in the lurch."¹⁰⁰ In the absence of Sykes, who was in Egypt, Weizmann and Malcolm led the radical counterattack to foil the mission. In this effort Weizmann played the role in which he was cast by Sykes who, prior to his departure for the Middle East, had introduced him to his deputies – Ronald Graham from the Foreign Office and William Ormsby-Gore from the War Cabinet secretariat – "so that we should be able to continue our work in his absence."¹⁰¹ At the meetings he had at the Foreign Office immediately after learning of the mission, Weizmann raised a series of arguments regarding the damage that Morgenthau might cause to British interests,¹⁰² but as he wrote to one of his Zionist associates, Harry Sacher, on June 11, 1917, he had gained the impression that the senior officials with whom he had met "do not seem to attach very much value to this move, but they countenance it."¹⁰³ Weizmann was, then, quick to recognize the duality of the Foreign Office position, which even though it did not "encourage" Morgenthau's mission, it did not oppose its political objectives, either, and even supported them.¹⁰⁴

Sykes returned from Egypt on June 14, 1917 or the following day,¹⁰⁵ and joined the struggle against the Foreign Office's reformist position. He reported that "the Foreign Office pro-Turkish gang" was working to negotiate a separate peace with Turkey, thus thwarting the policy of promoting an Arab-Jewish-Armenian alliance that he had fostered "in the past two years." Sykes further explained that while "[o]ur main object should be to smash the Bagdad Railway" – meaning the Turkish-German alliance – the Foreign Office strived to ensure an easy peace for Turkey that would leave Germany as a dominant power in the Middle East, and accordingly must be halted. Sykes succeeded in these efforts and reported that "a few rights and lefts, a breakfast with the Prime Minister ... laid them low." As part of his anti-reformist offensive, Sykes sought the help of Weizmann and the Zionist-radicals, and he later noted that "[l]uckily Zionism held good and the plots to bring Morgenthau over and negotiate a separate peace with Turkey ... were foiled."¹⁰⁶ In the wake of Sykes's "war" with "the pro-Turkish gang," the British government, says Stein, sought the means "of torpedoing the Morgenthau mission without antagonising Wilson," and opted for "the excuse provided by the Zionist and Armenian protests."¹⁰⁷ With Lloyd George's help Sykes therefore managed to neutralize reformist control of the Foreign Office and impose the radical policy on Balfour, a move that led to Weizmann's appointment as the British delegate to the Gibraltar talks with Morgenthau, with the aim of foiling his mission.¹⁰⁸

Weizmann departed for Gibraltar on June 29, 1917.¹⁰⁹ On the way, in Paris, he met with Baron de Rothschild who voiced his concerns about the Morgenthau Mission and cautioned him to "be very careful" to avoid falling into a trap "which could be laid on for us."¹¹⁰ For two days in early July Weizmann held talks with the American delegation headed by Morgenthau. Following the radical policy, Weizmann made it clear that "the British Government would not consider a peace with Turkey unless it were satisfied that Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria and Palestine are to be detached from the present Turkish Empire."¹¹¹ At the conclusion of

the conference Morgenthau announced the termination of his mission. In *Trial and Error*, Weizmann related that “[i]t was no job at all to persuade Mr. Morgenthau to drop the project. He simply persuaded himself,” this after Weizmann forced him to acknowledge that Turkey was not yet ready for negotiations and that he did not know what terms the Turks would be willing to accept for a separate peace.¹¹² Reinharz viewed Morgenthau’s decision to terminate his mission as “the result of Weizmann’s skills as a diplomat.”¹¹³ On the other hand, in his article ‘Revisiting Ambassador Morgenthau’s Peace Mission of 1917’, Frank W. Brecher contended that the main factor in Morgenthau’s decision was not “the Zionists’ influence,” but the information conveyed to him by Shmavonian, his advisor on Turkish affairs, according to which he had been declared “persona non grata in Constantinople,” which voided the political and diplomatic assumptions of Morgenthau’s mission.¹¹⁴ Brecher’s interpretation is also substantiated in Weizmann’s report to Graham that the information on which Morgenthau’s mission was based “was not quite new and not very recent,” whereas Shmavonian “left Turkey on the 29th May and he was, of course, able to give a picture of the more recent situation there.”¹¹⁵

Weizmann’s radical positions were therefore the key to the status he acquired in Lloyd George’s administration, which perceived him as a partner in the making of the policy of partitioning the Ottoman Empire and annexing Palestine to the British Empire, a policy that informed the publication of the Balfour Declaration. Thus far, historians have not attributed adequate importance to Weizmann’s radicalism, a fact that might explain the dead end arrived at by the historiographical debate on both the question of “why the Balfour Declaration was made,” as well as that of Weizmann’s contribution to its publication.

The problem of ignoring Weizmann’s radicalism is demonstrated by the attempts of Stein and Reinharz to explain his influence on the political process that led to publication of the Balfour Declaration. Both scholars noted the positive change in the British government’s attitude toward the Zionists at the end of 1916 in the wake of Lloyd George’s appointment as prime minister,¹¹⁶ but they overlooked the confluence of the radical content of the political turnabout and the rise in Weizmann’s status. Indeed, both Stein and Reinharz dismissed Lloyd George’s statement that the Balfour Declaration was made as a reward for Weizmann’s contribution to the acetone production method, as “myth,” “nonsensical” and an “apocryphal story;”¹¹⁷ but on the other hand they claimed that the relationship Weizmann fostered with Lloyd George and other government officials in the course of his work at the Ministry of Munitions and the Admiralty played an important role in advancing the idea of the Declaration. Stein explained that his dismissal of the Lloyd George statement does not mean that “Weizmann’s war-time services to the State were wholly irrelevant to the history of the Declaration.” On the contrary, according to Stein, Weizmann’s work at the Ministry of Munitions “brought him into close personal contact with Lloyd George and, because of the confidence and respect he inspired, placed him in a strong position.” Therefore, Stein summarized, Weizmann’s contribution to the acetone production method “has a bearing on the origins of the Declaration to the extent, though only to the extent, that, by raising his stature and adding to his prestige, it made him so much the more effective an advocate of the Zionist Cause.”¹¹⁸ Similarly, Reinharz also contended that “[t]he trust in Weizmann could hardly be divided between the scientist and the Zionist Statesman,” and that “Lloyd George and his closest colleagues in the cabinet placed full confidence in Weizmann precisely because of his contribution to the war effort ... This attitude received added force after Lloyd George became prime minister in December 1916.”¹¹⁹

However, Weizmann's contribution to the British war effort and his relations with government officials did not accord him any political influence during the period of Asquith's reformist government. This fact undermines the logic of Stein's and Reinhartz's arguments. It therefore seems that Weizmann's scientific contribution and his personal relationships lacked any political effect while the reformists were in power. Hence it was his radical involvement, not his scientific contribution, that from the outset was at the root of Lloyd George's trust in Weizmann and the source of Weizmann's ability to influence British policy after Lloyd George became prime minister at the end of 1916. Thus, by embedding Zionism within the radical agenda, Weizmann had transformed Zionism into a political asset for Lloyd George's government, accorded himself a status that had turned him into a part of the inner radical power structure, and enabled him to influence the moves leading to the Balfour Declaration.

The internal Zionist struggle over drafting the Declaration

In June 1917, together with his efforts to thwart the Morgenthau Mission, Weizmann held talks with senior Foreign Office officials on publication of a declaration in which "the British Government should give expression of its sympathy and support to the Zionist aims and should recognise the justice of the Jewish claims on Palestine."¹²⁰ Within four months these contacts were to mature into the Balfour Declaration.

Two separate developments accorded an increasing measure of urgency to the Declaration in June 1917. First, British officials were concerned about the growing tendency in Russia toward a separate peace with Germany; to frustrate this drift the British administration reconsidered supporting the Zionists as a means of enlisting the Jews of Russia to a propaganda effort with the aim of influencing Russian public opinion to support the continuation of the war alongside the Entente Powers. And second, they aspired to foil Wilson's efforts to achieve a separate peace with Turkey in exchange for preservation of its territorial integrity in Asia. To secure this second goal, the radicals extensively used the principle of national self-determination – promoted by Wilson in Europe – as a pretext for dissolving the Ottoman Empire in Asia, and sought ways of using Zionism to this effect. These political considerations, particularly the second one, explain why the publication of a pro-Zionist Declaration became an urgent radical interest in the summer and autumn of 1917.

The first official step that led to the Balfour Declaration was a letter from Weizmann to Graham, dated June 13, 1917. In his letter Weizmann cautioned against the German government's attempts to use German Zionists for propaganda purposes in Russia and the United States on the one hand, and on the other, he mentioned the support that he and his followers had enlisted in the Entente countries for the idea of "a Jewish Palestine under England." To help in the Zionist campaign against German propaganda, Weizmann suggested that the British government publicly announce "its sympathy and support to the Zionist aims."¹²¹ Graham passed Weizmann's idea on to Balfour and recommended that it be accepted,¹²² but Balfour opposed it for the same reasons he had rejected Weizmann's attempt to gain his support for radical-Zionism on March 22, 1917, and noted that "[I] should still prefer to associate the U.S.A. in the protectorate, should we succeed in securing it." Balfour emphasized the reformist logic that guided his opposition to the idea of the Declaration in a comment on Graham's memorandum: "how can we [publicly?] discuss dismembering the Turkish Empire before the Turks are beaten?"¹²³ It therefore appears that at this stage, had

these matters depended on Balfour, it is very doubtful whether the declaration bearing his name would have been published.¹²⁴

The Declaration initiative gained symbolic support following unexpected developments that took place in the Anglo-Jewish establishment. On June 17, 1917, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the representative body of British Jewry, rejected by a small majority an anti-Zionist statement issued by its leadership, a decision that the Zionists tendentiously interpreted as an expression of support for their position.¹²⁵ In the wake of this ostensibly pro-Zionist decision, Rothschild informed Weizmann that in light of the new situation in which “the majority of Jews are in favour of Zionism,” he had asked Balfour for a meeting with both of them in order to advance the publication of the Declaration.¹²⁶ At the meeting on June 19, 1917, Weizmann and Rothschild contended that “the time has arrived for the British Government to give us a definite declaration of support and encouragement.” Balfour, according to Weizmann’s report, “promised to do so,” and asked Rothschild and Weizmann to submit a proposal for a draft of the requested declaration,¹²⁷ which “he would try and put before the War Cabinet for Sanction.”¹²⁸

In less than a week – between June 13 and 19, 1917 – Balfour abandoned his opposition to the Declaration and became a supporter of its publication. Stein and Reinharz offered a technical explanation of Balfour’s volte face and argued that on June 17 the two conditions he had imposed for his support of the Declaration had been fulfilled:¹²⁹ Sokolow had returned from France with a letter from Jules Cambon, the head of the political section of the French Foreign Ministry, which expressed support for the “Jewish nationality’s revival” in Palestine under the auspices of the Entente Powers;¹³⁰ and the “pro-Zionist” resolution by the Board of Deputies had been passed.¹³¹ This explanation possesses chronological but not political logic, since both Stein and Reinharz ignored Balfour’s reformist policy, which opposed the Declaration, in principle, due to its radical repercussions. And indeed, it seems that Balfour used the absence of French accord only as a pretext for his opposition to the publication of the Declaration. Weizmann detected this in the course of their talk on March 22, 1917, and reported to Scott that “my feeling was that Mr. Balfour does not attach very much importance to the French claim and certainly does not attach any value to the French holding Palestine,” and that he would have preferred either internationalization of Palestine or an Anglo-American protectorate.¹³² Balfour continued to hold this opinion during his visit to the United States in May, and when he returned to London in June. It is therefore difficult to assume that it was Cambon’s letter that changed his opinion. Furthermore, Cambon had conditioned French support of Zionism on the victory of the Entente Powers,¹³³ a move that ran counter to Balfour’s reformist inclination, as demonstrated in those same days by his attitude to the Morgenthau Mission. The contribution of the Board of Deputies resolution to the change in Balfour’s opposition to the Declaration is even more doubtful. Indeed, Graham noted that following this vote the British government “will no longer [need] to consult” with the Conjoint Foreign Committee that represented the Board of Deputies and the Anglo-Jewish Association on questions of foreign policy.¹³⁴ However, these organizations, which traditionally opposed the national element in Zionism, had lost their influence much earlier, with the establishment of Lloyd George’s radical government, which preferred to deal with Weizmann and the Zionist-radicals. A different explanation is therefore required for the abrupt change that took place in Balfour’s position on the Declaration.

The accepted interpretations describe the Morgenthau Mission and its thwarting as a subplot in the history of British-Zionist relations that led to the Balfour Declaration.

However, this description is the outcome of an erroneous retrospective view – in June 1917 the priorities of both the British government and Weizmann were precisely the opposite:¹³⁵ the urgent issue was the Morgenthau Mission, whereas the negotiations on the Declaration were of secondary importance. In light of the parallel discussions that took place on the Morgenthau Mission and publication of the Declaration, it seems that the more probable reason for the change in Balfour's position on the Declaration is the same one that brought about the change in his position on the Morgenthau Mission: Sykes's return from the Middle East on June 15, 1917, and his successful radical counterattack – with Lloyd George's support – against “the pro-Turkish gang” in the Foreign Office. Balfour, who was aware of this change in power relations, adapted to the new situation regarding both the Morgenthau Mission and the pro-Zionist declaration. An echo of this dynamics can be seen in a report that Weizmann sent to Sacher on June 20, regarding his and Rothschild's meeting with Balfour the previous day: “Mr. Balfour expressed his opinion against a dual Anglo-French control and he would be rather in favour of an Anglo-American combination but he thinks that Mr. Lloyd George is strongly against it.”¹³⁶

In accordance with the agreement reached at their meeting on June 19, 1917, Weizmann and Rothschild were to submit to Balfour on behalf of the Zionists a draft proposal of the Declaration as the basis for a cabinet discussion.¹³⁷ On June 20, Weizmann gave Sacher the task of preparing the draft, based on the following principles: it would state that “the British Government declares ... its intention to support Zionist aims for the creation of a Jewish national home in Palestine,” but without going into “the question of the Suzerain Power” in order not to make it difficult for the British.¹³⁸ The principles proposed by Weizmann were far closer to the final wording of the Declaration than the draft that was finally submitted by the Zionists to the Foreign Office, which extended the scope of the British assurance to “the principle that Palestine should be reconstituted as the National Home of the Jewish People.”¹³⁹ It is difficult to reconstruct Weizmann's considerations in reducing the outlines of the Zionist demand. Were they the result of a cautious approach like that of Sokolow, who warned that “if we want too much we will get nothing,”¹⁴⁰ or perhaps more reasonably they were the fruit of Weizmann's assessment of the limits of the possible Zionist achievement in view of his awareness of the power relations between the various rival factions in the British government?

Weizmann left for Gibraltar at the end of June. Before leaving he transferred supervision over the formulation of the Zionist proposal for the Declaration to Rothschild, who submitted it to Balfour on July 18, 1917. In accordance with the understanding with Balfour, in Weizmann's absence Rothschild was to convey the proposed Zionist draft on his own, but Weizmann went a step further and dictated that the wording of the draft declaration would be subjected to Rothschild's supervision and veto. In a letter to Sacher, Sokolow, who coordinated the preparation of the Zionist draft, explained that “[t]he formula or formulas chosen will have to be given to Lord R. for his suggestions; this has been decided before Chaim left,” and should Rothschild oppose the proposed wording, he – Sokolow – “wouldn't be able to ignore it.”¹⁴¹ A possible explanation for transferring supervision over the formulation of the proposed Zionist declaration draft to Rothschild may be found in the increasing tension that had arisen between Weizmann and the close circle of his Zionist supporters in the summer of 1917.

From the beginning of the war and up to his election as president of the British Zionist Federation in February 1917, in the absence of adequate official status, Weizmann's political

activity relied on the support of individuals from among the Jewish and Zionist leadership, like the Rothschilds, Ahad Ha'am, and Sokolow. At the same time, Weizmann built up his power and influence with the assistance of a group of young Zionist activists in London and Manchester, organized by him around the idea of "British Palestine." This group, which included Harry Sacher, Simon Marks, Israel Sieff, Leon Simon, Samuel Tolkowsky, and others, constituted the "inner circle" of his supporters.¹⁴² However, while relations between the Zionist-radicals and the Lloyd George administration became closer, the relations between Weizmann and the inner circle gradually worsened as a result of organizational and political differences. On the organizational level, the inner circle voiced increasing criticism of the secrecy and centralism that characterized the conduct of Weizmann and Sokolow, and they demanded the establishment of reporting and consultation mechanisms that would enable them to increase their influence over the shaping of Zionist policy. At the end of July 1917, these demands led to the establishment of the "London Zionist Political Committee." Weizmann had serious reservations about the Committee, and claimed that it stemmed from "dissension and personal distrust" and meant to restrict his freedom of action.¹⁴³ And indeed, formulation of the draft declaration was characterized by disagreement between Sokolow and Sacher.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, the discussions on the establishment of the Jewish Legion in August–September 1917 were replete with bitter confrontations that led to Weizmann's repeated resignations from both the Executive Committee of the British Zionist Federation and the Political Committee.¹⁴⁵ Weizmann claimed that the Political Committee members "began to introduce Soviet tactics into the Zionist movement,"¹⁴⁶ and in talks with them he even defined the Committee as "a Soviet," which they viewed as a derogatory name that indicated "ingratitude."¹⁴⁷ In response, Weizmann even considered "to inform the Committee of his desire to be placed at the head of Federation, more or less like a dictator."¹⁴⁸

The organizational struggle between Weizmann and the inner circle was exacerbated by a severe political dispute. The beginnings of this disagreement were in the appeal lodged by Sacher and others against what they perceived as Weizmann's readiness to subordinate the Zionists' demands to radical interests. Later, Sacher also attacked Weizmann's opposition to "the idea of a separate peace with Turkey," and stated that "I myself would not buy a British protectorate at the cost of prolonging the war by a single day." Above all, Sacher vigorously attacked the identification created by Weizmann between realization of the Zionist vision and British imperialist interests, and cautioned: "I see the peril that we Zionists in England may be infected with imperialism at the very time when the rest of the world is beginning to cast it off."¹⁴⁹ While Weizmann rejected Sacher's criticism before the publication of the Declaration, he would increasingly endorse it after the war, in his policy later known as "Weizmannism."¹⁵⁰

Weizmann's "dictatorial" thoughts, which developed in the shadow of the increasing personal mistrust and organizational suspicions between him and his confidants-adversaries in the inner circle, may explain his decision to minimize their influence on the negotiations with the British government and to give Rothschild veto power on the decision regarding the wording of the proposed draft Declaration. It seems, then, that Weizmann's decision was due mainly to his determination to curb the reformist influence of Sacher and other members of the inner circle, as well as his insistence on ensuring the radical nature of Zionist policy in his absence. That Weizmann assumed that Rothschild would best implement their shared radical policy may also be inferred from the fact that in early September 1917, after

announcing his resignation as president of the British Zionist Federation, Sokolow thought that Weizmann would want Rothschild to be appointed as his successor.¹⁵¹

In Weizmann's absence the formulation of the proposed draft of the Declaration was put into Sokolow's hands, and he duly consulted Sykes and Foreign Office officials to make sure that Balfour would accept the Zionist wording.¹⁵² At the same time Sokolow acted to persuade the members of the Political Committee to accept the formulation arrived at in his contacts with Sykes.¹⁵³ The version that Rothschild eventually conveyed to Balfour on July 18, 1917 included two clauses: the first, political – the British government accepts the principle “that Palestine should be reconstituted as the National Home of the Jewish People;” and the second, administrative – the manner in which the British government would cooperate with the Zionist Federation in order “to secure the achievement of this object.”¹⁵⁴

In the course of the discussions on the wording of the Declaration as proposed by the Zionists, it was the administrative clause that attracted the most attention. However, when the draft was conveyed to the War Cabinet for approval, a change in emphasis came about and the discussion focused on its political aspect. The reason for this change was the draft's clearly radical nature: the meaning of a British declaration in favor of the establishment of Palestine as a “national home of the Jewish people” meant support for the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. As such, the suggested wording of the pro-Zionist declaration became an additional battleground between the radicals and the reformists. The linkage between the pro-Zionist declaration and the future of the Ottoman Empire was also dictated by developments taking place in the Middle East: the discussions on publication of the Declaration were held at the same time as Britain was preparing for the conquest of Palestine. At the end of June 1917, General Edmund Allenby was appointed commander of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, and Lloyd George ordered him to take Jerusalem before Christmas that year. On October 31, the day the War Cabinet decided in favor of publishing the pro-Zionist Declaration, Allenby was victorious in the Battle of Beersheba, which marked the start of the British invasion of Palestine that led to the conquest of Jerusalem in early December.¹⁵⁵ This military context – like the conquest of Aqaba by Arab forces led by Lawrence in July and their continued advance toward Damascus¹⁵⁶ – made the question of the future of the Ottoman Empire even more urgent. In this sense, the British cabinet discussions on the pro-Zionist declaration in the autumn of 1917 were the climax of the radical-reformist struggle, and the decision to publish the Declaration was in fact a manifestation of the radicals' triumph: it was a decision in favor of the dissolution and partition of the Ottoman Empire and expansion of the British Empire in the Middle East.

The struggle in the War Cabinet over the wording of the Declaration

On August 20, 1917, Balfour circulated a proposed draft of the Declaration for the perusal of the cabinet ministers. In fact, Balfour's draft was the version submitted to him by Rothschild, with some revisions that limited the Zionists' role in the realization of the proposed Declaration: whereas Rothschild's version suggested that the British government “will discuss the necessary methods and means with the Zionist Organizations,” Balfour's version promised only that the government “will be ready to consider any suggestions on the subject which the Zionist Organizations may desire to lay before them.”¹⁵⁷ On August 23, Lord Milner, a member of the War Cabinet, proposed an amended version that in the reformist spirit reduced the scope of the national and territorial commitments undertaken

by the British government in a way that impaired the advantages the radicals hoped to gain from the Declaration. Thus, instead of the Balfour version, which determined that “Palestine should be reconstituted as a national home of the Jewish People,” in the Milner version it was only stated that “every opportunity should be afforded for the establishment of a home for the Jewish people in Palestine.”¹⁵⁸ The most zealous reformist opponent of the Declaration was the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu.¹⁵⁹ On August 23, Montagu, who was Samuel’s cousin, circulated a memorandum entitled “The Anti-Semitism of the Present Government,” which bitterly attacked the national element of the Declaration draft.¹⁶⁰ The proposal to publish the Declaration was raised for discussion in the War Cabinet on September 3, 1917, at a meeting in which the question of the Jewish Legion was also discussed.¹⁶¹ In the absence of Lloyd George and Balfour, who were out of London, Montagu dictated the course of the discussion, at the end of which the reformists recorded a significant victory: it was agreed that the decision be postponed until receipt of President Wilson’s opinion on the question of whether it was advisable to publish a pro-Zionist declaration.¹⁶² After consulting with Colonel House, Wilson responded on September 11 in accordance with his reformist policy that “the time was not opportune for any definite statement.”¹⁶³

Balfour intensified and exaggerated the significance of the reformist opposition to the Declaration that had informed the cabinet decision. After a long delay, on September 21, he reported to Rothschild that the cabinet had decided that “the moment was not opportune for a declaration,” and on September 24, in reply to Graham, who requested that publication of the Declaration be accelerated, he wrote that “as this question was (in my absence) decided by the Cabinet against the Zionists, I cannot do anything until the decision is reversed.”¹⁶⁴ Thus Balfour made use of the cabinet decision in order to withhold continuation of the discussion on the Declaration, and his responses echoed the tension between his reformist positions and Lloyd George’s radical policy. In light of Balfour’s obstructionism, Weizmann, with the help of radical officials including Sykes and Graham, took action to obtain a counter decision. On September 28, through the good offices of Scott, he had a brief meeting, lasting only a few minutes, with Lloyd George, in the wake of which the prime minister ordered that the Declaration be re-discussed at the next cabinet meeting. In preparation for this, Weizmann met with several members of the War Cabinet to enlist their support for the Declaration.¹⁶⁵ At the same time, on October 3, Weizmann and Rothschild sent a memorandum to the Foreign Office in which they contended that Montagu was presenting the “divergence of views ... existing in Jewry” on the question of the Declaration “in a strikingly one-sided manner,” and emphasized the political benefit that Britain would accrue from the Declaration as well as the damage that would be caused by postponing its publication.¹⁶⁶

The Declaration was re-discussed in the War Cabinet on October 4, and beforehand Milner once again amended its wording in order to address radical-Zionist, anti-Zionist, and pro-Arab objections that had been raised since the previous meeting. On the one hand, in accordance with the radical agenda, he restored the term “national home” to the Declaration, while on the other he addressed claims raised by opponents of the Declaration that it would harm Jews in the Diaspora or Arabs in Palestine and added qualifications that limited the scope of its implementation.¹⁶⁷ During the discussion, the reformist front disintegrated: Balfour, who realized that Lloyd George was determined to publish the Declaration, relinquished any further struggle and joined the Declaration’s supporters. Accordingly, in the spirit of the Weizmann-Rothschild memorandum of October 3, Balfour refuted the arguments raised by Montagu at the previous cabinet meeting, and stressed the urgency

of publishing the Declaration in view of the assessment and concern – which proved to be erroneous – prevailing in the Foreign Office regarding German efforts to get the Zionists on their side by publishing their own declaration of sympathy with Zionist goals in Palestine. Montagu, by contrast, was still steadfastly opposed and repeated his reformist arguments that rejected the Declaration's national element, to which he added the expected damage to his own status and function as Secretary of State for India. The opponents of the Declaration were joined in this meeting by another member of the War Cabinet, Lord Curzon, who argued that Jewish immigration would have a negative effect on the Arabs in Palestine.¹⁶⁸ In a letter to Brandeis, Weizmann reported that in the wake of Montagu's statements, Lloyd George and Balfour had summoned him to the meeting to present the Zionist case to the cabinet, but there was some difficulty in locating him and he missed "this rather historic occasion."¹⁶⁹ At the conclusion of the meeting it was decided that in view of a previous Foreign Office commitment, prior to publication of the Declaration consultations should be held with "representative Jewish leaders," Zionists and non-Zionists alike, regarding its content, and that Wilson's opinion should be sought on the second version proposed by Milner.¹⁷⁰

Following the cabinet decision, in addition to Montagu, nine Jewish leaders were asked for their opinion on the proposed Declaration and its wording, a step that formed a new intra-community arena for the struggle between supporters and opponents of the Declaration. The lists of non-Zionist and of Zionist leaders were compiled in consultation with Montagu and Weizmann, respectively.¹⁷¹ The factional considerations that guided the compilers of the lists were reflected in the case of Gaster: his candidacy to be one of the pro-Zionist respondents was put forward but rejected on the grounds that the quota of Zionist respondents was filled;¹⁷² however, the fact that Weizmann preferred other Zionist leaders may show that the cause of Gaster's rejection was his reformist positions.

Weizmann estimated that the supporters of the Declaration were assured of a majority among the Jewish respondents,¹⁷³ but he was troubled by the influence of Montagu who had briefed at least one of them on the wording of his response.¹⁷⁴ Weizmann therefore approached Samuel, and in a "[s]trictly private and confidential" way, asked him to check with some of the non-Zionist respondents whether "a satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at so as to avoid a somewhat humiliating fight at the last moment."¹⁷⁵ This initiative was proved to be unnecessary because in any case there was a majority of respondents in favor of the Declaration.¹⁷⁶ At the same time, in his capacity as president of the British Zionist Federation, on October 11 Weizmann started a campaign of support for publication of the Declaration among the Jewish communities in Britain, which reached its peak with 300 letters of support from synagogues and Jewish and Zionist organizations that were sent to the Foreign Office. In the wake of this campaign Graham stated on October 23 that "outside a small, influential clique, Jewish feeling appears almost unanimously favourable to the Zionist idea."¹⁷⁷

In accordance with the War Cabinet's decision, the Foreign Office sent the draft of the Declaration to President Wilson for his approval. To ensure that Wilson would respond positively, Weizmann approached Brandeis and asked him to exert his influence on the president. But before Brandeis and the American Zionists had a chance to act, Wilson had already made a positive decision, and House informed the British that Wilson "approves of" the Declaration, "but asks that no mention of his approval shall be made when His Majesty's

Government makes the formula public, as he had arranged that American Jews shall then ask him for his approval, which he will give publicly here.”¹⁷⁸

Within a month, then, Wilson had changed his policy regarding the Declaration: on September 11, 1917, he had believed that “the time was not opportune,” and on October 13 he approved its publication. This volte face, which has raised ongoing unresolved scholarly controversy,¹⁷⁹ might be elucidated in the interpretative framework of the reformist-radical struggle. From Wilson’s reformist perspective, the Declaration was a radical move that advanced the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, and as such he opposed it. Thus, in September Wilson answered in the negative because the reformist-radical struggle in the War Cabinet had not been decided yet, and his opposition to the publication of the Declaration strengthened the British reformists. However, in October, like Balfour, Wilson realized that Lloyd George was going to win and his opposition would not prevent the publication of the Declaration. Under these circumstances, he notified the British that he would not object to the Declaration, on condition that his acquiescence would be kept secret, namely, he would be able to pursue his reformist policy. And indeed, only in October 1918 did Wilson partially confirm the US’s support of the Declaration, and full support was expressed only after the war.¹⁸⁰ The cabinet was to discuss the Declaration again on October 25, 1917, but the discussion was postponed to allow Curzon to submit a memorandum summarizing his objections, which were addressed in Sykes’s pro-Zionist counter-memorandum.¹⁸¹ The final discussion on the Declaration took place in the War Cabinet on October 31. In the absence of Montagu, who had left on a political mission to India on October 18,¹⁸² and over Curzon’s mild objections, Balfour’s proposal that “from a purely diplomatic and political point of view, it was desirable that some declaration favourable to the aspirations of the Jewish nationalists should now be made”¹⁸³ was accepted and the cabinet adopted Milner’s second version, which became the Balfour Declaration.

However, speaking at the cabinet meeting on October 31, Balfour opened a new phase in the radical-reformist struggle over the Declaration: the struggle over its practical meaning and the ways it would be implemented. Highlighting the objections that were raised by the opponents of the Declaration, Balfour said:

As to the meaning of the words “national home” to which the Zionists attach so much importance, he understood it to mean some form of British, American, or other protectorate, under which full facilities would be given to the Jews to work out their own salvation and to build up, by means of education, agriculture, and industry, a real centre of national culture and focus of national life. It did not necessarily involve the early establishment of an independent Jewish State, which was a matter of gradual development in accordance with the ordinary laws of political evolution.¹⁸⁴

It seems, then, that although he gave up on the publication of the Declaration, Balfour still advanced the reformist agenda. He reiterated the idea of an American or other – Anglo-American, for example – protectorate. Moreover, Balfour maintained that the Declaration did not necessarily mean a “Jewish State,” and could be interpreted as a “centre of national culture and focus of national life.” These opposing policies were the core of the radical-reformist struggle, and by juxtaposing them Balfour pointed to the possibility of foiling the radical use of the Declaration in the future by according it a reformist interpretation.

The struggle for publication of the Balfour Declaration was, then, just another arena for the ongoing struggle between the radicals and the reformists. The disagreements between the supporters and opponents of the Declaration were focused on the weight accorded in

it to the term “national home,” its political content and geographical borders, coupled with the role to be played by the Zionist movement in its realization, and the extent of its influence on Diaspora Jewry and the Arabs in Palestine. The disputes over the national content of the Declaration were endowed with fervent ideological rhetoric that concealed from contemporary public opinion and future scholarly analyses the radical-reformist struggle that informed and determined the making of the Declaration. The radicals viewed the pro-Zionist declaration as a means to advance their policy of dissolution and partition of the Ottoman Empire and annexation of Palestine to the British Empire. To foil the radical policy and keep the struggle on the future of the Ottoman Empire open, the reformists, led by Montagu, strove to challenge the national basis of the Declaration and reduce and limit the scope of British commitment to the Zionists.

Montagu – a son of a leading family of the Anglo-Jewish plutocratic establishment¹⁸⁵ – was appointed Secretary of State for India on July 18, 1917, the day that Rothschild sent the draft Declaration to Balfour. When the news of his appointment became known, Rothschild told Weizmann that “I was afraid we were done.”¹⁸⁶ Rothschild’s fear reflected the potential risk inherent in Montagu’s opposition to the Declaration as a result of his standing in the Liberal Party and the reformist faction, coupled with his Jewish origin, and his family’s status in the Anglo-Jewish community and British politics. After his first election to Parliament as a Liberal MP in 1906, Montagu became one of Asquith’s closest confidants, and under his sponsorship climbed the ministerial ladder, reaching the top in July 1916 when he succeeded Lloyd George as Minister of Munitions. As a loyal Asquithian and avowed reformist, in the course of the war Montagu was at the forefront of the reformist struggle against Lloyd George and the radicals. Paradoxically, Montagu’s past alliance with Asquith continued to serve as his main political asset after the latter’s resignation, as well: Lloyd George, who sought to expand the political basis of his coalition and strengthen his own standing in the Liberal Party, acted to bring Asquith’s supporters into his government, and in this context, as one of Asquith’s closest allies, Montagu was perceived as a preferred candidate. After several months of negotiations in which he initially demanded the portfolio of Chancellor of the Exchequer, Montagu agreed to his appointment as Secretary of State for India. Montagu continued to promote the reformist policy in Lloyd George’s radical government. In the course of the final period of the war and during the peace talks that followed, Montagu acted to thwart Lloyd George’s policy of dissolving the Ottoman Empire and curtailing Turkish sovereignty in Anatolia. Montagu also opposed the “Carthaginian peace” that Lloyd George imposed on Germany at the Versailles Peace Conference. His opposition was guided by a broader political-economic perception, as part of which he supported the efforts of John Maynard Keynes – with whom he had collaborated in his various ministerial posts since 1910 – to foil Lloyd George’s German policy. Montagu’s appointment as Secretary of State for India added further dimension to his opposition to Lloyd George’s Turkish policy. In August 1917 he announced in Parliament the “Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms” designed to reduce the colonial basis of British rule in India and advance self-rule there in order to make India a dominion.¹⁸⁷ Lloyd George’s anti-Turkish crusade antagonized the Muslims of India and, accordingly, Montagu’s pro-Ottoman policy was intended, *inter alia*, to ensure their support of his reforms.

Although he was not a member of the War Cabinet, Montagu took part in the discussions on the Declaration in accordance with the custom of inviting to the cabinet’s meetings those ministers whose ministerial affairs were involved in the subject under discussion.¹⁸⁸ To create

the basis for his invitation, as mentioned above, Montagu circulated a memorandum entitled “The Anti-Semitism of the Present Government,” in which he emphasized that “as the one Jewish Minister in the Government I may be allowed by my colleagues the opportunity of expressing my views....”¹⁸⁹ The principal argument raised by Montagu against publication of the Declaration – in his memoranda, letters to colleagues, and his speeches in the cabinet – was ideological: he maintained that the Jews are a religion, not a nation, and so a declaration in favor of a “national home” for the Jews would injure the civil status of the Jews in Britain; as far as he was personally concerned, Montagu emphasized that the Declaration would label him a foreigner, cast doubt on his loyalty to Britain, and restrict his ability to act as a minister on behalf of its government, all of which would render support of Zionism “anti-Semitism.” Political reasons played only a marginal role in Montagu’s argumentation: publication of the Declaration, he claimed, would encourage Arab resistance and arouse the Muslims, which would consequently harm the chances of his policy in India.¹⁹⁰

Montagu’s decision to highlight the argument of anti-Semitism as the main reason for his opposition to the Declaration is puzzling, for two main reasons. First, as a reformist and as Secretary of State for India his attitude to the Declaration was informed first and foremost by his opposition to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and its negative implication on the Muslims of India, so he could have been expected to present his opposition from that point of view. Second, until then he had shown a patent lack of interest in Anglo-Jewish community matters or in the distress of Jewish communities around the world.¹⁹¹ However, his choice to establish his argument on the rejection of the national element of Judaism and the assertion that its recognition would harm the rights of Jews worldwide might actually demonstrate the political considerations that guided his opposition to the Declaration: in view of the radicals’ use of Jewish nationality as a means of promoting dissolution and partition of the Ottoman Empire, he strove to counterbalance it and minimize its influence as part of the reformist struggle against radical policy.

The influence of the interfactional struggle on the Declaration is also evident in Milner’s involvement in its wording. Politically and strategically, Milner took the middle ground between the reformists and the radicals.¹⁹² On the one hand he thought that long-term considerations dictated that Britain should extend its imperial presence in the Middle East, while on the other he argued that despite this, the constraints of the war called for action to remove Turkey from the war both by increasing military pressure on it and by offering it attractive terms for peace – or as Friedman put it: ensuring that “dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire was no more than a paper division, and that the Allies were prepared to forgo the spoils” – that would make it easier for the Turks to part ways with the Germans and end the war.¹⁹³ Milner’s position on the question of British support for Zionism was formed within this duality and derived from it. Thus, on May 16, 1917, Claude Montefiore – one of the heads of the Conjoint Foreign Committee – reported that from a talk with Milner, a family friend, he had learned that his opinions “appeared to be between our formula and the full Zionist scheme.” Montefiore further noted that Milner “seemed to favour the establishment of a Jewish community in Palestine, or parts of Palestine, under a British Protectorate. Within its own borders such a community would be autonomous, but it would not be an independent State,” and would be “subject to the control of the British Authority.”¹⁹⁴ Stein emphasized Milner’s distinction between “an independent state” and “an autonomous Jewish community in Palestine,”¹⁹⁵ a distinction that in the context of the radical-reformist struggle meant the difference between partition of the Ottoman Empire and changing its political

structure in such a way that would also allow “British Authority.” These views informed the changes that Milner made to the wording of the Declaration prior to the War Cabinet meeting on September 3. On the one hand, he supported the publication of the Declaration as a demonstration of Britain’s intention of increasing its presence in the Middle East, and on the other, by replacing “the national home of the Jewish people,” which appeared in Balfour’s original draft with “a home for the Jewish people,” he defused the radicals’ use of the national principle to legitimize the partition of the Ottoman Empire, thus leaving the decision regarding the Empire’s future to the peace negotiations.

Whereas Milner’s version reflected his middle-of-the-road approach, Montagu attempted to promote a version congruent with pure reformist logic. Where Milner changed “the national home” to simply “a home,” Montagu preferred the term “refuge,” which diluted even further the national element of the Declaration, and its radical significance. Thus, in a letter dated October 14, Montagu noted that he would prefer that the government avoid the Declaration. He mentioned that “President Wilson does not wish for a definite statement conveying any real commitment at present.” But on the assumption that it would be published, Montagu proposed an alternate version to that of Milner, which stated that the British government “accepts the principle that every opportunity should be afforded for the establishment in Palestine [*sic*] for those Jews who cannot or will not remain in the lands in which they live at present.” Furthermore, Montagu stressed that “I do not wish to limit the suggestions which are invited to the Zionist organizations,” as stated in the Milner version, and instead he proposed to state that the British government would be “ready to consider any suggestions on the subject which any Jewish or Zionist organisations may desire to lay before it.”¹⁹⁶ Montagu’s attempt to break the monopoly attained by the Zionists – in fact, the Zionists-radicals’ monopoly – over relations with the government was guided by the reformist rationale as well. By employing the term “Jewish organizations” Montagu meant to minimize the national effect of the Declaration, thus reducing the benefits the radicals intended to make of it. The Anglo-Jewish organizations he had in mind denied the emphasis that Zionism’s definition of Judaism placed “on nationality, not religion,” as Claude Montefiore put it,¹⁹⁷ and rejected the Zionist claim that “the Jewish settlers in Palestine should be recognized ... as possessing a national character in a political sense.”¹⁹⁸ At the same time, these organizations supported the premise that Britain would ensure the Jews in Palestine had “reasonable facilities for immigration and colonisation, and such municipal privileges in the towns and colonies inhabited by them as may be shown necessary” as was proposed, for example, by Lucien Wolf in a memorandum submitted to the Foreign Office in early 1916.¹⁹⁹ The combination of rejection of Jewish nationalism and adulteration of “the national home” to “municipal rights” was congruent with the reformists’ opposition to the radicals’ use of the national principle as justification for dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, while the assurance of aid for Jewish settlement could be part of the changes the reformists sought to bring about in the structure of the Ottoman regime. Thus, despite the impression formed by his arguments, Montagu’s opposition to the Declaration was not driven by ideological disagreements on nationalism between Jews and Zionists, but by the current political struggle between the reformists and radicals.

The radical-reformist struggle also guided Lloyd George’s actions: his enlistment to the cause of thwarting the reformist achievement in the War Cabinet on September 3 changed the balance of power prior to the additional meeting on October 4. This change was reflected in the restoration of the term “national home” to the wording of the Declaration, a term that

embodied its principal value as part of radical policy. “The national home” remained the key term in the version approved by the War Cabinet on October 31, a version that was included in the letter sent by Balfour on November 2 to Lord Rothschild, as the representative of the Zionist movement, which since then has been known as “the Balfour Declaration.”

Analyzing the political rationale that guided the confrontations on the wording of the Balfour Declaration in the War Cabinet enables us to outline the motives behind its publication. As opposed to prevailing interpretations, the Declaration was not the outcome of a British attempt to achieve propaganda, political, or military objectives connected with the war, even though its supporters made extensive use of these reasons. The Declaration was a means in the struggle between the radicals and reformists and an additional step in the realization of radical policy: no less than the Declaration supported Zionism, it was a declaration in favor of dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, its partition, and the annexation of Palestine to the British Empire.

Identifying the radical significance of the Balfour Declaration in the framework of the interfactional struggle in Britain allows a more coherent explanation of Weizmann’s contribution to its publication. From late 1914, on the advice of Baron de Rothschild, Weizmann subordinated his Zionist policy to the radical agenda. Moreover, Weizmann contributed to the formulation of radical policy by turning support for Zionism into one of its underpinnings, and from the early stages of the war he indicated the manner in which support for the Zionist project in Palestine might aid in dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the expansion of the British Empire in the Middle East. Weizmann’s radical activity aided in building up his status both as a Zionist leader and a British statesman, a duality that enabled him to meld radical policy with a Zionist agenda, the peak of which was reached with the publication of the Balfour Declaration.

Notes

1. Sykes, *Cross Roads to Israel*, 12.
2. On the historiography of the Balfour declaration, see Gutwein, “Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour.”
3. Vereté, “The Balfour Declaration and Its Makers,” 63, 49–50.
4. The disagreement between the two factions are at the center of Adelson, “The Formation of British Policy towards the Middle East.” See also Jenkins, *Asquith*, 350–54, 382–84; Rowland, *David Lloyd George*, 282–83, 294–300.
5. Scally, *The Origins of the Lloyd George Coalition*, 3–28, 280–370.
6. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 1–58.
7. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 15.
8. Barzilay-Yegar, “Crisis as Turning Point,” 241–42.
9. Ferguson, *The World’s Banker*, 978; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 182–87.
10. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 189.
11. Weizmann to Leonard Ornstein, October 4, 1914, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 18.
12. Weizmann to Ahad Ha’am, September 16, 1914, in *ibid.*, 8.
13. Weizmann to Jean Fischer, October 14, 1914, in *ibid.*, 20.
14. Weizmann to Israel Zangwill, October 19, 1914, in *ibid.*, 28.
15. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 177–78; letter to Leopold Greenberg, November 20, 1914, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 50, 69–74.
16. Letters to Leopold Greenberg, November 20, 1914, Harry Sacher and Leon Simon, December 3, 1914, December 4, 1914, December 6, 1914, in *ibid.*, 50, 69–74.
17. Letter to Ahad Ha’am, November 12, 1914, in *ibid.*, 37.

18. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 11–12.
19. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 838; see also 826–27, 836–39.
20. *Ibid.*, 827–28, 833.
21. Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*, 193.
22. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 977.
23. Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*, 193.
24. Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 239.
25. Schama, *Two Rothschilds and the Land of Israel*, 191; Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 239.
26. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 977–78; Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 239–40, 249–50.
27. Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 251–52.
28. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 953–58; Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 41–44; Davis, *The English Rothschilds*, 235–40.
29. Kynaston, *The City of London*, 609–10.
30. Ferguson, *The World's Banker*, 965–67.
31. *Ibid.*, 974; Rothschild, *Dear Lord Rothschild*, 243.
32. Report submitted to the members of the Executive of the International Zionist Organisation, January 1, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 113.
33. Summary of a conversation with Baron James de Rothschild, November 25, 1914, in *ibid.*, 56.
34. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 178; letter to Harry Sacher and Leon Simon, December 6, 1914, in *ibid.*, 73.
35. Letter to Charles P. Scott, December 13, 1914, in *ibid.*, 79.
36. Wasserstein, *Herbert Samuel*, 201–11; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 8–9.
37. Letter to Ahad Ha'am, December 14–15, 1914, and Report submitted to the members of the Executive of the International Zionist Organisation, January 7, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 81–82, 114–15.
38. Summary of a conversation with Baron James de Rothschild, November 25, 1914, in *ibid.*, 56.
39. Report submitted to the members of the Executive of the International Zionist Organisation, January 7, 1915, in *ibid.*, 113.
40. Letter to Sir Philip Magnus, January 5, 1915, in *ibid.*, 103.
41. On a less credible version of the meeting's content supplied by Weizmann, see Gutwein, "Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour."
42. Letter to Vera Weizmann, December 29, 1914, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 100 (emphasis in the original).
43. Letter to Vera Weizmann, December 31, 1914, in *ibid.*, 102.
44. Letter to Jacob Moser, January 7, 1915, in *ibid.*, 107.
45. Letter to Gaston Wormser, June 28, 1915, in *ibid.*, 215.
46. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 190–91; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 131–46; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 128.
47. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 103.
48. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 191–92.
49. On the Lloyd George affair and the war loans of the Allied Powers, see Gutwein, "Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour."
50. On the Samuel-Weizmann relations, see Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 191–92.
51. Letter to Charles P. Scott, February 16, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 154.
52. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 24.
53. Letter to Charles P. Scott, February 16, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 153.
54. *Ibid.*, 154–55.
55. Letter to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1915, in *ibid.*, 184.
56. Letter to Charles P. Scott, February 16, 1915, in *ibid.*, 154.
57. Letter to Dorothy de Rothschild, February 15, 1915, in *ibid.*, 149–50.
58. Cf. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 209.
59. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 118.
60. Renton, "Changing Languages of Empire and the Orient," 652.
61. Adelson, *Mark Sykes*, 176–207.

62. Renton, "Changing Languages of Empire and the Orient," 650–54; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 213; Israeli, "Ha-ma'avak," 145–47; cf. Auron, *The Banality of Indifference*, 222–24.
63. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 32–33, 109.
64. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 360–64.
65. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 230.
66. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 288–90; Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 131.
67. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 290–95.
68. Hirschler, "Malcolm James Artoon," 748; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 362; Gutwein, *The Divided Elite*, 462.
69. Letter to Joseph Cowen, February 16, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 152.
70. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 109–10.
71. Malcolm, "Dr. Weizmann and the Balfour Declaration," 9–10; Malcolm, *Origins of the Balfour Declaration*; Malcolm, *Palestine and the Jewish Problem*.
72. Martin, *Peace without Victory*, 22–45; Kernek, *Distractions of Peace during War*, 6–42; Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 59–61.
73. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 62; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 127–28.
74. Scott, *The Political Diaries*, 258.
75. Letter to Joseph Cowen, February 16, 1915, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 152; on the appointment of Sokolow, see also Gutwein, "Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour."
76. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 152–66.
77. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 377; Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 147; Letter to Alfred Read, May 10, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 405–6.
78. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 379–83.
79. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 130.
80. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 378–85; Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 147–52.
81. Adelson, *Mark Sykes*, 143–310; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 164–76; Martin, *Peace without Victory*, 22–45; Kernek, *Distractions of Peace during War*, 6–42; Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 59–61, 72; Israeli, "Ha-ma'avak," 144–45.
82. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 384.
83. Evans, *United States Policy and the Partition of Turkey*, 5–45; Brecher, "Revisiting Ambassador Morgenthau's Turkish Peace Mission," 357; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 211–308.
84. Letter to Ronald Graham, July 6 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 463.
85. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 142.
86. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 289–300; Karsh and Karsh, *Empires of the Sand*, 251–52.
87. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 263–64; Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 146.
88. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 62–63; Brecher, "Revisiting Ambassador Morgenthau's Turkish Peace Mission," 358.
89. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 264; Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 129.
90. Letters to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1917, and Jacob de Haas, May 10, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 346, 406.
91. Letter to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1917, and note of interview with Lord Robert Cecil, April 25, 1917, in *ibid.*, 346–47, 375–78.
92. Letter to Joseph Cowen, March 26, 1917, in *ibid.*, 348.
93. Letter to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1917, in *ibid.*, 346.
94. *Ibid.*; and letter to Jacob de Haas, May 10, 1917, in *ibid.*, 406 n. 6; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 462.
95. Letter to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 347.
96. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 246.
97. Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 157.
98. *Ibid.*, 149–50.
99. Brecher, "Revisiting Ambassador Morgenthau's Turkish Peace Mission," 357; Reinhartz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 157.
100. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 246.

101. Letters to Nahum Sokolow, April 4, 1917, and Louis D. Brandeis, April 8, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 351, 357.
102. Letters to Harry Sacher, June 11, 1917, and Sir Ronald Graham, June 13, 1917, in *ibid.*, 436–42.
103. Letter to Harry Sacher, June 11, 1917, in *ibid.*, 437.
104. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 355.
105. Adelson, *Mark Sykes*, 234; letter to Charles P. Scott, June 26, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 453 n. 4.
106. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 355; Israeli, “Ha-ma’avak,” 145; Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 128; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 210, 219; Shmuel Tolkowsky, *Yoman tziyoni-medini*, 120–21.
107. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 356.
108. On the politics and historiography of Weizmann’s appointment, see: Gutwein, “Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour.”
109. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 160–61.
110. Letter to Vera Weizmann, June 30, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 456.
111. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 356; letter to Sir Ronald Graham, July 6, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 463.
112. Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 249–50.
113. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 164.
114. Brecher, “Revisiting Ambassador Morgenthau’s Turkish Peace Mission,” 360–61.
115. Letter to Sir Ronald Graham, July 6, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 461.
116. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 145–46; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 112–13.
117. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 120; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 67–68.
118. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 120.
119. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 69.
120. Letter to Sir Ronald Graham, June 13, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 442.
121. *Ibid.*, 438–42.
122. *Ibid.*, 442 n. 17.
123. *Ibid.*
124. Gillon, “The Antecedents of the Balfour Declaration,” 131.
125. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 459–61; and see below.
126. *Ibid.*, 464.
127. On the question of submitting the draft, see: Gutwein, “Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour.”
128. Letter to Harry Sacher, June 20, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 445; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 151–52.
129. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 462–65; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 151–52.
130. Edy Kaufman, “The French Pro-Zionist Declarations,” 383–84.
131. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 462–65; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 151–52.
132. Letter to Charles P. Scott, March 23, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 346.
133. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 415–18.
134. Letter to Sir Ronald Graham, June 13, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 442 n. 17.
135. Letters to Charles P. Scott, June 20, 1917, June 26, 1917, in *ibid.*, 446, 450–54. See also: Gutwein, “Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour.”
136. Letter to Harry Sacher, June 20, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 445.
137. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 151–52.
138. Letter to Harry Sacher, June 20, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 445.
139. *Ibid.*, 445 n. 11.
140. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 466.
141. *Ibid.*, 465; Tolkowsky, *Yoman tziyoni-medini*, 133.
142. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 124.
143. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 172–78.
144. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 466–67.

145. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 182–87.
146. Letter to Charles P. Scott, September 13, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 510.
147. Tolokowsky, *Yoman tziyoni-medini*, 192.
148. *Ibid.*, 183.
149. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 271–73; Israeli, “Ha-ma’avak,” 157; Tolokowsky, *Yoman tziyoni-medini*, 139–42; Gutwein, “Ha-gormim le-pirsum hatzharat Balfour.”
150. *Ibid.*, Epilogue.
151. Tolokowsky, *Yoman tziyoni-medini*, 172.
152. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 467–72.
153. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 177–79.
154. *Ibid.*, 179.
155. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 195, 328; Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem*, 548, 623–24.
156. Schneer, *The Balfour Declaration*, 321–32.
157. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 664.
158. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 255–57.
159. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 484, 497–500.
160. Basheer, *Edwin Montagu and the Balfour Declaration*, 5–8.
161. Israeli, “Ha-ma’avak,” 161–62.
162. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 189–90.
163. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 504–5; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 189–92.
164. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 195; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 509–10.
165. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 509–13; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 195–96.
166. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 514.
167. *Ibid.*, 514, 664; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 196.
168. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 267–68; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 196–98; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 515–19.
169. Letter to Louis D. Brandeis, October 7, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 524; Weizmann, *Trial and Error*, 259.
170. Lipman, “Anglo-Jewish Leaders and the Balfour Declaration,” 155; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 514–22; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 196–97; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 267–68.
171. Vital, *Zionism*, 286; Lipman, “Anglo-Jewish Leaders and the Balfour Declaration,” 155–56; Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, 303–4; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 520–24.
172. Lipman, “Anglo-Jewish Leaders and the Balfour Declaration,” 157.
173. Letter to Gaston Wormser, October 16, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 536.
174. Cohen, *English Zionists and British Jews*, 303–4.
175. Letter to Herbert Samuel, October 10, 1917, in Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers*, 532.
176. Lipman, “Anglo-Jewish Leaders and the Balfour Declaration,” 153–57, 170–80.
177. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 519–33; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 274.
178. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 200–1.
179. Lebow, “Woodrow Wilson and the Balfour Declaration,” 501–2.
180. *Ibid.*, 521–23; Brecher, “Woodrow Wilson and the Origins of the Arab-Israeli Conflict,” 27–29.
181. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 277–78.
182. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 500.
183. *Ibid.*, 546; Sanders, *The High Walls of Jerusalem*, 610.
184. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 547.
185. Gutwein, *The Divided Elite*, 336–96.
186. Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 180.
187. Gutwein, *The Divided Elite*, 336–96.
188. Lipman, “Anglo-Jewish Leaders and the Balfour Declaration,” 155.
189. Basheer, *Edwin Montagu and the Balfour Declaration*, 5.

190. Ibid., 5–17; Waley, *Edwin Montagu*, 139–41; Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 496–501; Reinharz, *Chaim Weizmann*, 180–81, 195–209; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 259–62, 266–69.
191. Gutwein, *The Divided Elite*, 363–65.
192. Millman, *Pessimism and British War Policy*, 130–42; Gollin, *Proconsul in Politics*, 535–38.
193. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 220; Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy*, 130–31, 171–72.
194. Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 257.
195. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 317.
196. Basheer, *Edwin Montagu and the Balfour Declaration*, 11; Friedman, *The Question of Palestine*, 262.
197. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 176.
198. Basheer, *Edwin Montagu and the Balfour Declaration*, 10–11.
199. Stein, *The Balfour Declaration*, 222.

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