Address all communications to
The Secretary, Zionist Commission,
Tel-Aviv, Jaffa, Palestine.

16th November, 1918.

ZO宁ST COMMISSION
TO PALESTINE.

My dear Dr. Weizmann,

I am glad to learn from a cable received on the 17th inst.
that you may yet return to Palestine before long. Although
your presence in Europe during peace negotiations is most essen-
tial, your presence here is also of importance. Situation here
is unsatisfactory. Precedents are being created which are against
us. I must mention that there are optimists who insist that
nothing which may happen now will be considered as precedent.
But I am afraid they deceive themselves. They even contradict
our own policy. Was not the sending of a Zionist Commission
meant to create a precedent, to establish a claim? Or the lay-
ing of the foundation stone of the University? In the same way,
things that occur against us may establish precedents.

So not think me too hasty and impatient. I never expected
the National Home to arise here at once, and as a lawyer I
especially appreciate respect shown to status quo ante pending
hostilities. But I and all of us, including yourself, believed
in two things at least. First, that policy in Palestine would
be clear and definite, making everybody realise that the prom-
ise to restore the Jewish National Home was meant in earnest
and could never be revoked or revised. Second, that complete
equality of right and privileges between Arabs and Jews would
be established immediately and automatically as soon as British
officers take over the administration. Because the obligation
to respect the status quo does not apply to cases repelling to
humanity, like slavery or inequality of rights. That we ex-
pected, and were bitterly disappointed.

I will begin with equality. The first mistake was made
long ago, and now I begin to regret you did not protest against
it. The composition of the two town councils in Jerusalem and
Jaffa, the striking difference of principles applied here and
there, prejudiced our position from the start. You know that
in Jaffa, where Jews are a minority, the proportional principle
was applied – 7 Arabs and 2 Jews. But in Jerusalem, where Jews
are the relative majority, even now, and were a huge absolute
majority before the Turkmens expulsion of 1914-1918, the propor-
tional principle was disregarded, and Jews are only 1/3 of the
town-council, and the mayor appointed by the British is a
Muslim (a militant anti-Jewish one, as you will see further). I
do not dwell now on the question whether the proportional prin-
ciple is good or bad. But it was a mistake – or a purpose – to
apply it where it is against us and disregard it where it is
favourable to us. Everybody noticed it, only the interpretation
was different: Jews optimistically thought it was a mistake.
Arabs thought it was a purpose and drew their conclusions. What followed is also partly known to you. All offices are still full of local Arab clerks; but Jews are rare — so rare that wherever a Jew turns he has to deal with an Arab official. The explanation is that Jews do not know Arabic or English. But many Sephardins know Arabic quite well, and, besides, in a city like Jerusalem or even Jaffa ignorance of Hebrew should be considered as a drawback equivalent to ignorance of Arabic — and is not. As to English, Arab clerks did not know it a year ago, but of course 12 months in office have taught them. The result is that Jews are governed and administered if not by Arabs, at least through Arab channels and hands, with all the resulting anxiety, incertitude, humiliation and bitterness natural under this state of things. Police is another trouble. Jews are still practically confined to the gendarmerie, which as you know is here a lower sort of police, receiving lower pay and employed on less important errands. Of course, knowledge of Arabic is required from all Jewish candidates for promotion (even in Jerusalem), and no Hebrew is required from Arab candidates (even in Jerusalem). The head-dress officially promised is not being supplied and our men are being urged to wear the Muslem red tarbush, and now in Jaffa yellow badges have been issued with the word "Jafis" written in English and Arabic, but not in Hebrew.

Here I come to the question of Hebrew. After your
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departure a serious conflict has arisen. In Jaffa and colonies Jews were requested to pay the Yerko tax against receipts printed in Arabic only. Of course they refused and the matter was referred to C.E.T.A. General Haip decided that "English receipts should be issued to those who refuse to accept Arabic", but no Hebrew receipts would be given. For the sake of peace, the Commission urged Tel Aviv and the colonies to accept English receipts for the time being, especially as General Clayton promised to intervene and straighten things for the next time. But you can easily realise the bitterness and disappointment this tactless blunder created in our ranks. It also happened that this was the first thing the liberated Jews of Galilee learnt when they came to pay a visit to Jaffa. I cannot describe their feelings otherwise than by using the word "bewilderment". They had expected quite a different tableau under British rule. Unfortunately this is not the end of the system yet. Non-passenger-tickets are being issued on pay for civilians using the Jerusalem-Haifa railway; they are printed in English and Arabic. The C.E.T.A. postage stamp has been sanctioned by the Caree Bureau and is now the official stamp of liberated Palestine: it is English and Arabic, without Hebrew, within a year after Balfour's declaration and a few months after the laying of the foundation stone of a University which proclaimed Hebrew as the vehicle of civilisation in Palestine.

I repeat: the National home can and must wait pending hostilities or even peace negotiations, but equality of rights
is different. Had anybody told me a year ago that English administrators would deliberately discriminate against Jews and their language while recognising the existence of other local dialects, I would have called that man a liar. True, General Clayton promised to intervene and we hope to get sooner or later a ruling placing Hebrew at the same rank as Arabic at least on receipts. But the stamp? The railway tickets? The practice that all correspondence between the Government and Arab institutions is conducted in Arabic and Military Governors sign Arab originals in Arabic, while correspondence with Jews is conducted in English and not always a Hebrew translation is added? No wonder they have no use for Hebrew clergy. Incidentally it results in depriving a certain number of young Jews of an honest opportunity to earn money by clerical work. Will all this practice change? I wonder. Even if it will, it is bad enough that Jews have to struggle for elementary things like these, "des choses qui vont sans dire" even in Switzerland, left alone in Palestine.

You remember, yet before you left you were alarmed at the spreading of anti-Zionist feeling among British soldiers in Palestine; you spoke of it to Gaff, and he agreed on the necessity of propaganda. Well, I regret I can report no improvement. True, most of the fighting Army has gone North and we hear less of that sort of thing from regimental officers. But in the military administration things do not look rosy for us at all. Mind you, I do not accuse governors or staff captains
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of deliberate anti-Semitism. May be they are sympathetically disposed and would make good pro-Zionists in England. But when they come here they find, on the one side, Arabs whose position is simple and clear, who are just the same old "natives" whom the Englishman has ruled and led for centuries, nothing new, no problems; on the other side, the Zionist who is a problem from top to toe, a problem bristling with difficulties in every way — small in numbers yet somehow strong and influential, ignorant of English yet imbued with European culture, claiming complicated claims etc. The kindest of Englishmen hates problems and riddles. This is the natural difficulty of our position here; I begin to fear it will spoil our relations with British administrators even after the abolition of military rule. But whatever may be in store for us in future, at present we are not as a rule governed by sympathisers. The present Jaffa Governor, Col. Hambad, is characteristic. On the way of his arrival he called Gordon into his room and spoke of Jews politely, but disparagingly, said that he only considered Spanish Jews as belonging to the country, others were newcomers who had no claim to consideration of their peculiarities, Jews should learn Arabic which was "the language of the country", and he himself intended to address Jewish deputations in Arabic. He appeared to have heard practically nothing about the Commission or even the declaration. Mind you, he had been to see Gen. Money for instructions! Somehow he was prevented from
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addressing Jews in Arabic: Edar read up E.D.T.A. and insisted on their informing the Governor that he should be careful. Indeed, he gradually changed his attitude, began to read Zionist literature and seems or tries to seem quite sympathetic now. But can we put the same pressure everywhere? Is it the right thing that at this time of the day governors are being appointed to most important Jewish centres without any instruction given to them at least to avoid strikingly contradicting the declaration?

My dear friend, it will grieve you, but I must say that the whole official attitude here is one of apologising to Arabs for Mr. Balfour's League licence, of endeavour to atone for it by putting Jews always in the background. I cannot tell you who gave me, for instance, the following information, but it is a man trusted by you who saw the letter himself on the eve of Nov. and, in reply to an Arab protest against the celebration, the above-mentioned governor of Jaffa wrote back saying that England had no intention to hand over the country to Jews. Of course, he never meant Palestine to be handed over, but then a governor writes to Arabs he should add something positive to confirm that, with all respect due to their rights, England will mean to give effect to the National home promise. As it stands, such letters can only make Arabs believe that the declaration has become obsolete and void. This letter is not an exception. Everywhere Arabs are making the same inquiry — is it true you are going to hand over the country? — and
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everywhere, as far as we know, the answer 'no' (which, I quite agree is a natural and necessary answer), is given without due reservations, without pointing out that the intente's promise to keep holy soil and that the Arabs had better come to terms with Jews because the national Home policy is a feasible solution.

All this is only the development of a principle which was symbolised from the start in a curious and irritating detail — when the title 'Palestine Jews' was translated for the Hebrew edition 'Jews from the Holy Land' and then 'Jews from the Country' — all this to avoid calling Palestine by its Hebrew name because it means Israel-land, as naturally, so-land in English.

Jews are clever enough to have noticed all that, and they interpret the position in the only possible way — changes of their attitude — from resignation when they took the declaration seriously towards acceptance as they gradually began to think it was 'only a promise' — were noticeable even before the recent victory. At all costs to a head on the 2nd November.

As you know, we had orders from you to celebrate the day — I must confess I personally was not in a mood for celebration, but since it was desired in Union efforts were made to arrange the thing decently. In both Jerusalem and Jaffa Arab notables made representations to the Government protesting against the proposed festivities. In Jerusalem the Mufti, the mayor and
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the Inspector of Education told Col. Horra that there was a movement among the Arabs to attack the procession. He answered that offenders would be put in prison and made wear prison garb wherever they might be. So they promised to discourage the movement. No one of the Arab notables came to the manifestations either in Jerusalem or in Jaffa. The procession was advised by Major Haidy not to pass the Jaffa Gate, which they obeyed, but two schools - all children living in the Old City - had to go that way anyway. They were attacked by a group of Arabs, children and teachers were beaten and blue-white banners torn. Two of the missionaries were arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. As they were to belong to poor families, gentle pressure was put to accept apologies from the notables and to withdraw the complaint. The original proposal was that the Arab notables would pay a visit to Ellein at his house; then it sailed down to a meeting in the bosom of the Governorate; our friends went there, waited for two hours and were informed that Ellein had been removed from his position. The Arab notables were asked to come again on the following day, when at last the Arab notables appeared and expressed their regrets, etc.

But in the meantime the Arab notables made a step of much greater importance. On the morrow of the celebration a deputation of about two hundred Arab leaders, Moslems and Christians, headed by the Mayor of Jerusalem Kasim Hadim
(the Maﬁi did not go this time) presented to the Governor a petition to be handed over to Gen. Loney. Col. Horne told me that it contained a complete protest against Zionism and the declaration: Arabs could not consent to the country becoming a Jewish, to "foreigners" (sic) claiming the country as their own, and they objected to purely Jewish immigration but could only agree "to immigration of Christians, Moslems and Jews in equal numbers."

I believe that Col. Horne's conduct during this conflict was irreplaceable, and there are no crooks whatever of open insub-11
rectness on the side of British officials either, as you must not take it as indicative of individual officials. It is the system that turns these into this attitude. Everybody who knows everybody here without exception are unanimous in saying that they would not have dreamed of instigating in this form had they not been led or misled to believe that the declaration was virtually real and needed only the last kick to clear it away altogether. You must realize what it means, under
usual our conditions: to object to a procession expressing thanks to the same power whose troops are occupying the country; to attack this procession; to send a deputation protesting against the publicly proclaimed policy of all the Entente, on the morrow of the Entente's victory; and the men who do it are a Maﬁi, a Mayor appointed by the British, an Inspector of Education appointed by the British, and others also of a class which - especially among Syrians - usually avoids...
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démarshes likely, in their opinion, to cross the Government's intentions. Undoubtedly they thought that in this case the dé-
marche would not cross.

A precedent of the Mayor. If the non-election of a Jewish Mayor in a city called Jerusalem and composed mainly of Jews had any justification at all, it could only be the desire to keep peace in Jerusalem, to have a 'neutral' (although I fail to see why in an area more 'neutral' than a Jew) but this Mayor proved to be not a neutral but a militant. Just try to imagine what would have happened if a Jewish Mayor, anti-
semitic, appointed by the British to keep peace and represent all races, had acted in an analogous way against Palestinians. If the Government would really be prepared to act impartially, the man should be deposed without delay - as a Jewish Mayor would doubtless be in a remote but suggestive illustration remem-
bred the答题 case). But kéan! Situation remains in his office, and friend Norman B., who knows the situation, told me it would not do to raise the question of his removal because the Musselini family is influential among Jews. Of course he is right, it might create trouble. This is the key of the situation: the Arabs threaten to produce trouble, we are decent and endeavour to content tout le monde, and the blackmailer wins.

The worst of this Arab attitude is that it makes agree-
ment impossible. People make concessions, or take into account other people's interests, only when they know they have got to.
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But if they are convinced that the neighbour's claim is no more
booked by force, they will naturally avoid binding themselves by
any compromises. I must tell you frankly and brutally that I
consider all endeavour of rapprochement (in Palestine itself) as
waste of time as long as the policy of apologising to Arabs for
the declaration and of treating Jews and Arabs as inferior ele-
ments is continued.

As I told you, this policy cannot be pinned down to individ-
uals. It is rather lack of definite instructions from home.
But I do not mind betting that no instructions could make a symp-
thatiser of a man like Ben Zowdy, the author of the language
legislation enacted before, with the same test deployed on
the occasion, or on the latest case lest matter, he delivered
a speech at the Bethmale hospital inauguration in which he
coolly and politely condemns the policy of creating separate
institutions for different nationalities, i.e., all our work in
Palestine.

Why should go far, but they have not reached yet the
Foreign Office in London, because I still believe they soon
will. The way on earth thus comes the Chief Administrator of
Palestine be a man who has neither sympathy nor understanding
for Zionist aspirations.

Stern is still a useful captain in America, a brilliant
man, and no use to us or anybody. If they keep on keeping him
in that cell, we'll insist on his joining the Commission
where he would be a pillar of strength. No other appointees to report. We are cut off from all influence on the U.S. until even simple information comes to us casually and by chance.

Col. Beedes has left for Constantinople - for good. Gen. Clay- ton is still at Scutari, sympathetic and ready to help us as ever, but he is all we have, and I begin to doubt his power, especially over the U.S. army which seems to be a jealously autonomous little church with its own channels to the foreign office.

Let us have nothing cheerful to report about my regiment.

Col. Patterson has sent in his resignation. It would take me two hours to write down all the little but nagging pin-pricks which drove him to this step. I am afraid it is inevitable.

His resignation has not been accepted here, so he appeals to the Army Council. The 56th spent 7 weeks in the Jordan valley, some were in hospital with dysentery (I have already died); they did really well in the offensive, even taking, says that General Allenby told him at dinner he has been very pleased with the Jewish battalions. As a result, an battalion has been sent to the Suez front today. The 79th and Wellingtons are still in Egypt guarding those prisoners of war, while thearrison of Jaffa is Italian and in Jordanien Indian and in Afula I don't know what. The 79th is at Jaffa. The promise made to you - to let us enter Afula - was forgotten or disregarded. Samaria and Galilee, who had heard legends about Jewish troops, were not given the privilege of seeing our Jewish soldier. They are of more need at Jaffa and Tell el Keibir. This absence of
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Jewish soldiers is a strong coefficient in making Jews feel depressed and Arabs bold. There is not the slightest doubt that had the Jerusalem ruffians known there is a Jewish garrison in the City there would never have been any disturbance. The Palestinians are still a detachment, not a battalion, have no C.O., and only 12 officers. I regret to say that some of the best officers, feeling the thing becomes hopeless, ask for transfer to judiciary and administrative jobs. The men are depressed and discouraged. They all realize that garrison duty in Palestine is of no similar political importance then participation in the offensive - but they are in Egypt and even those of their fellows who are in Palestine have been sent to Kafa.

Unfortunately, there is no news on that front. To a certain extent, a closer look in the records will not yield any significant information. Only from vague telegrams of congratulations to Kafa, it seems that a new mention.

I cannot express any general impression based on the discussions so far. No one can be sure whether the Jewish troops are determined to fight or not, nor can one expect to get any reliable information. This leaves one to believe that the Jewish troops in Kafa behaved so disgracefully that it seems it is best for them to stay there. No cause, no badge, no mention, quartered outside of Palestine or in Kafa - this is the sum total of all of our efforts to lay the foundation of a Jewish army.

Do not think I am despondent, or prepared to proclaim that all is lost. I am sure many things will be straightened.
Gen. Macnaghten's linguistic legislation will be cancelled, its author will also go some day, but we'll get more clerks and perhaps a governor of our own. Here it only a question of waiting I would not mind it. after all, I have learned patience in the four years of my struggle for the Jewish Legion. In I am afraid of three things. First – the necessity to fight for elementary, obvious, primordial equality is so unanticipated, it is such a striking contradiction with everybody's idea. I believe, that disappointment has become general and I fear it will only grow, will be taught at our expense and exploited for the French intrigue. For the colonial intrigues, for all sorts of intrigue. I further fear that more and more disturbances, especially of opinion kind of excitement, than any war or political tumults like equality being denied one and another million votes in the street, will interest in a phrase not react violently. Second – I am afraid that we may be misled into good intentions will make reconciliation impossible. No difference snafu or a trifle, but about we being proven to be serious character, should especially a stop or slow mill between us. I assure you there will be a storm which will make all our policy with Arab past saling. Third – again in fear the Kaiser administration – the future civil administration – is there really such a gulf fixed between English military and civilian governors? I wonder. I rather think that they have more things in common – for instance, dislike of problems and a natural tendency to prefer a simple native dervish to a pretentious baboo who dares to
parade European culture without being an Englishman. He'll be the bebebo. Never mind having to fight for things in a period of transition, but I warn you that you cannot fight with the administration, and carry on large-scale colonization at the same time. Colonization is essentially a work requiring perfect agreement and active help of the political authorities. Are you still sure that Jewish officials, appointed by an English Colonist Secretary and responsible to English only, will stand all the strain of the transformation? In order, something might be wrong in our orientation, I think we go, who had to suffer for the sake of and orientation.

At least we understand, from the British measures, if we, wild, could impose the situation:

1. transfer all pre-1939 Jewish or non-Jewish to British Administration.
2. appointment of a special expert to the ... 
3. Jewish villages to be modelled on ... 
4. destruction of all Jewish and power in Palestine, confirming the Jewish state section.
5. an Instruction to be issued to all concerned, establishing absolute equality of rights between the English and other, in all offices, courts, 

6. two Councils in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa, Tel Aviv and ... efified to have an equal representation of Jews and Arabs; and appointment of some Jewish mayors.
7. Jewish regiment: name and badge: brigade under P.-
quartering on main Jewish centres through all the period of
occupation.

If you can help. Otherwise things are ill become unpleasant for all concerned.

Men and women are doing their best. Your friends
wonder why you have not written since you left.

With kindest regards and best wishes.

care sincerely,

[Signature] W. J. [Indelible]