

Each culture's beliefs are true for all members of that culture, and are true only for them.

The French might believe that Napoleon won the Battle of Waterloo and that belief would be true for all Frenchmen. If the British believe Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo, that too would be true--for the British.

...paraphrasing Callum G. Brown,

Israel and Palestine



Israel and Palestine

February 2026

Instructor: Chris Schaefer, Chris.Schaefer@bataandary.com

Books: Suggested outside reading, for those interested in more in-depth study:

Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths, by Bruce Feiler.

A Peace to End All Peace, by David Fromkin. (The treaties that ended World War I)

The Road Not Taken: Early Arab-Israeli Negotiations, by Itamar Rabinovich.

Six days in June: How Israel Won the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, by Eric Hammel.

The Accidental Empire: Israel and the Birth of the Settlements, 1967-1977 by Gershom Gorenberg.

Arafat: From Defender to Dictator, by Said K. Aburish.

Politics of Diplomacy, James A. Baker (the only successful period in the Middle East peace process).

The Israelis: Ordinary People in an Extraordinary Land, 2005, by Donna Rosenthal.

The Much Too Promised Land: America's Elusive Search for Arab-Israeli Peace, by Aaron David Miller.

Faith Misplaced: The Broken Promise of U.S.-Arab Relations: 1820-2001, by Ussama Makdisi.

News sources:

Haaretz: www.Haaretz.com

Al Monitor: www.al-monitor.com

Jerusalem Post: www.jpost.com

Times of Israel: www.timesofisrael.com

BBC: www.bbc.com

Al Jazeera: www.aljazeera.com

The Economist, Middle East Newsletter: www.economist.com/newsletters/middle-east-dispatch

The Guardian: www.theguardian.com

Media Line: www.themedialine.org

UNRWA: www.unrwa.org

Movies:

The Oslo Diaries. Documentary movie produced by Mor Loushy and Daniel Sivan, 2018.

No Other Land. Academy Award winning documentary movie produced by Israeli Yuval Abraham and Palestinian Basel Adra, 2024.

Other resources:

The Jewish Virtual Library, <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/> (To search, click the small magnifying glass icon in the upper right corner.)

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Religious Groups in the Area.

Jews. Arguably the oldest of the Abrahamic faiths. The main branch of Abraham's family were referred to as "Israelites," after the name given to his grandson Jacob who was re-named Israel ("God rules" or "God judges") after he reconciled with his twin brother Esau. All Jews are, theoretically, descendants of Israel. While in Egypt the Israelites grew in number and began to be called Hebrews. After they left Egypt and formed the Kingdom of Israel, their kingdom split and the northern Kingdom was conquered by the Assyrians. The remaining southern Kingdom, named Judah, gave birth to the name "Jew." Principal scriptures are the Jewish Bible and the Talmud.

Of 13.5 million Jews world-wide, about 5.7 million live in Israel and the West Bank and about the same number live in the U.S. and Canada. Religiously, Jews in Israel are often classified as Secular, Orthodox, or Ultra-Orthodox. They are also classified as Ashkenazi, Sephardic or Mizrahi based on family origin.

Christians. Followers of Jesus, a rabbi who preached a message of empowerment to the common Jewish people at a time when there was much discontent with the Roman governance, the Jewish Kings, and the Jewish priesthood. Principal scriptures are the Jewish Bible and the New Testament.

About 400,000 live in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. They are mostly Palestinians who are primarily Eastern Orthodox.

Sunni Muslims. Beginning about 610 AD, the Prophet Muhammad developed Islam as the continuation of the Abrahamic religion, believing that both the Jews and the Christians had gone astray. Principal scriptures are the Qur'an and the Hadiths, although the Jewish/Christian Bible is also acknowledged as scripture. Sunni Muslims have an informal, "lay priesthood" clergy. Fundamentalist Sunnis believe that the religious establishment (*ulema*) should govern and that secular government is unnecessary.

Eighty percent of the world's 13 million Palestinians are Sunni Muslim, with the rest being Christian. About 3.6 million Palestinian Muslims live in Israel, the West Bank and

Early Jewish and Palestinian struggles

UN partition plans

Israeli independence

Palestinian refugees

Mizrahi Immigration

Israeli and Palestinian governance

Israel's Wars

Arab Terrorism



The Diaspora, 135 AD
The Romans drive the Jews out of Jerusalem
and Judea after 1,300 years.

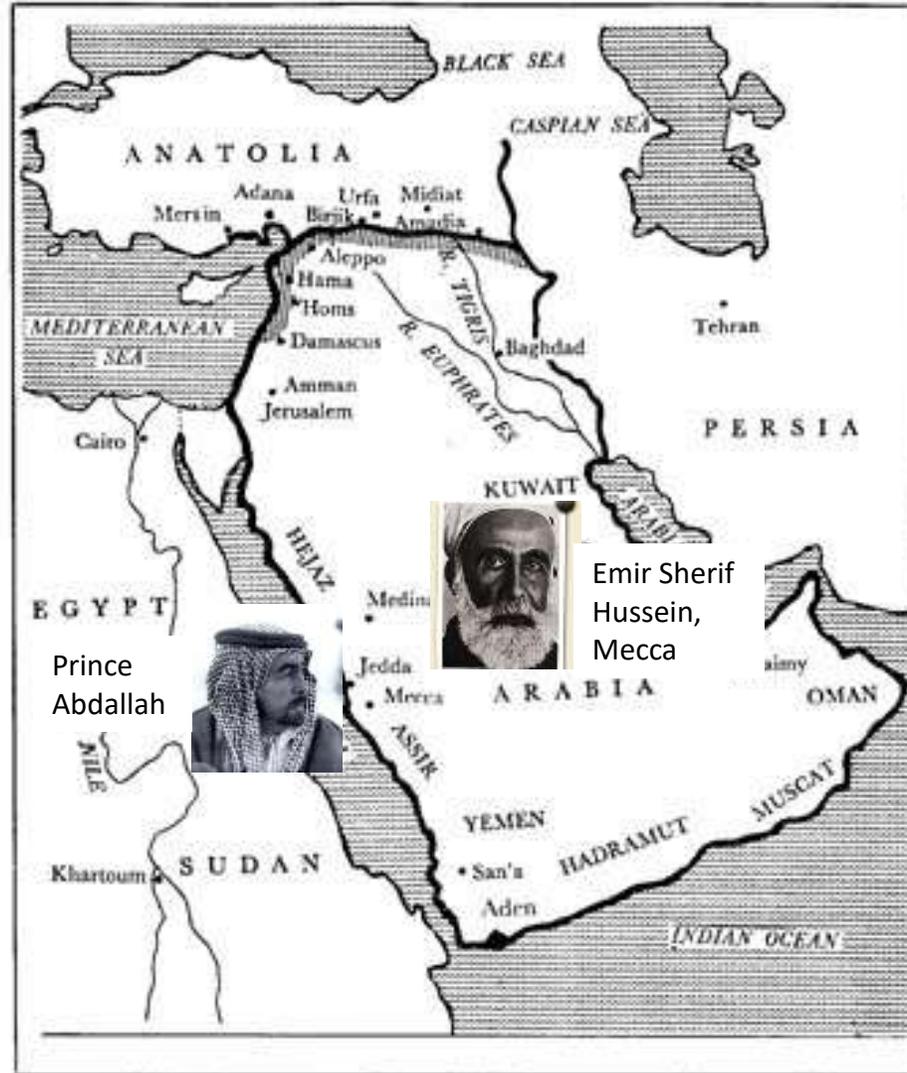


Theodor Herzl, founder of Zionism

The Hussein-McMahon Correspondence



Sir Henry McMahon,
Cairo



— Area of Arab independence as defined by Sherif Hussein in his letter dated 14 July 1915 to Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt.

||||| Area excluded from Arab independence as defined by Sir Henry McMahon in his letter to Sherif Hussein No. 4 dated 24 October 1915 and further explained by letter No. 6 dated 14 December 1915.



Prince
Abdallah



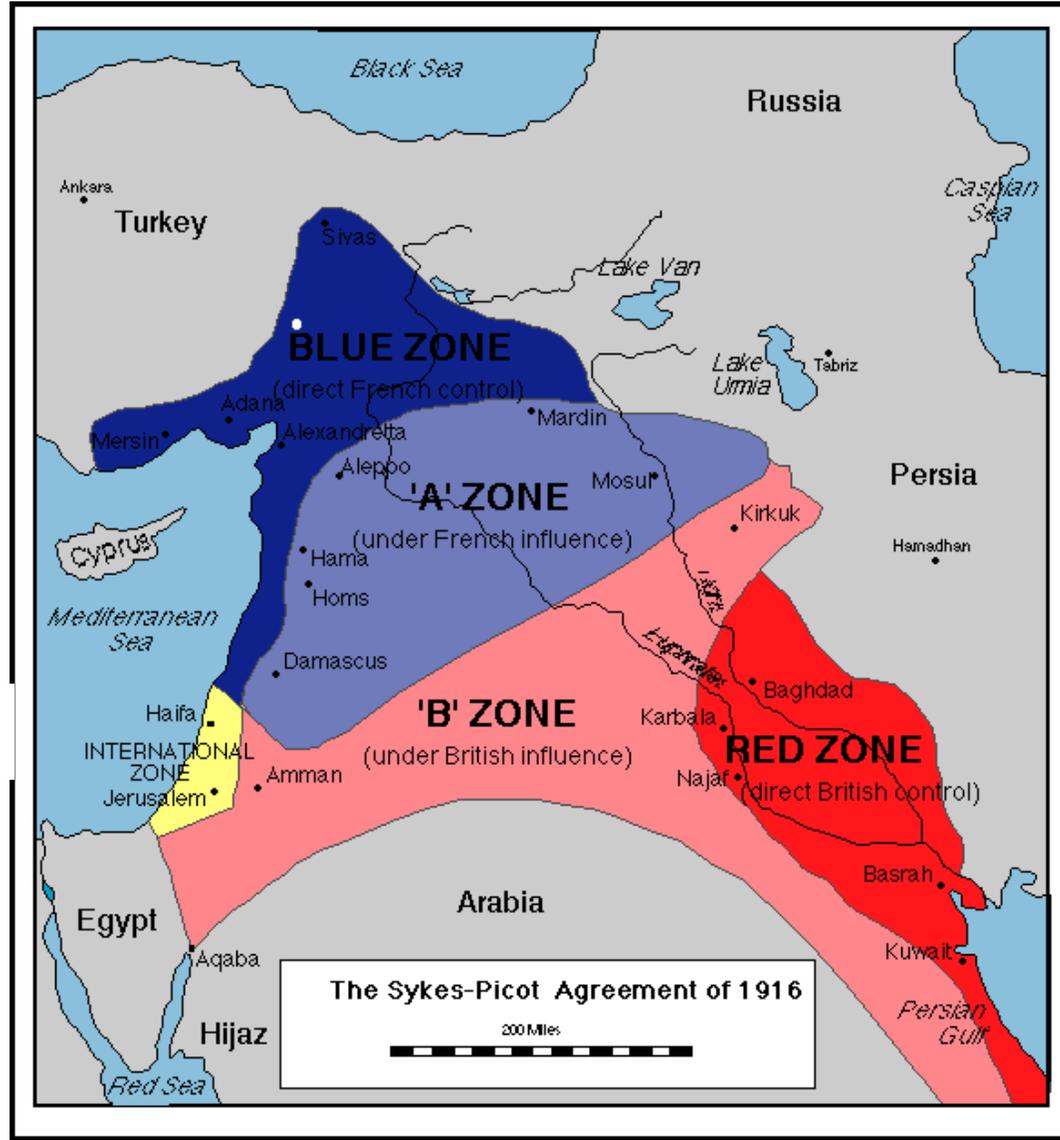
Emir Sherif
Hussein,
Mecca



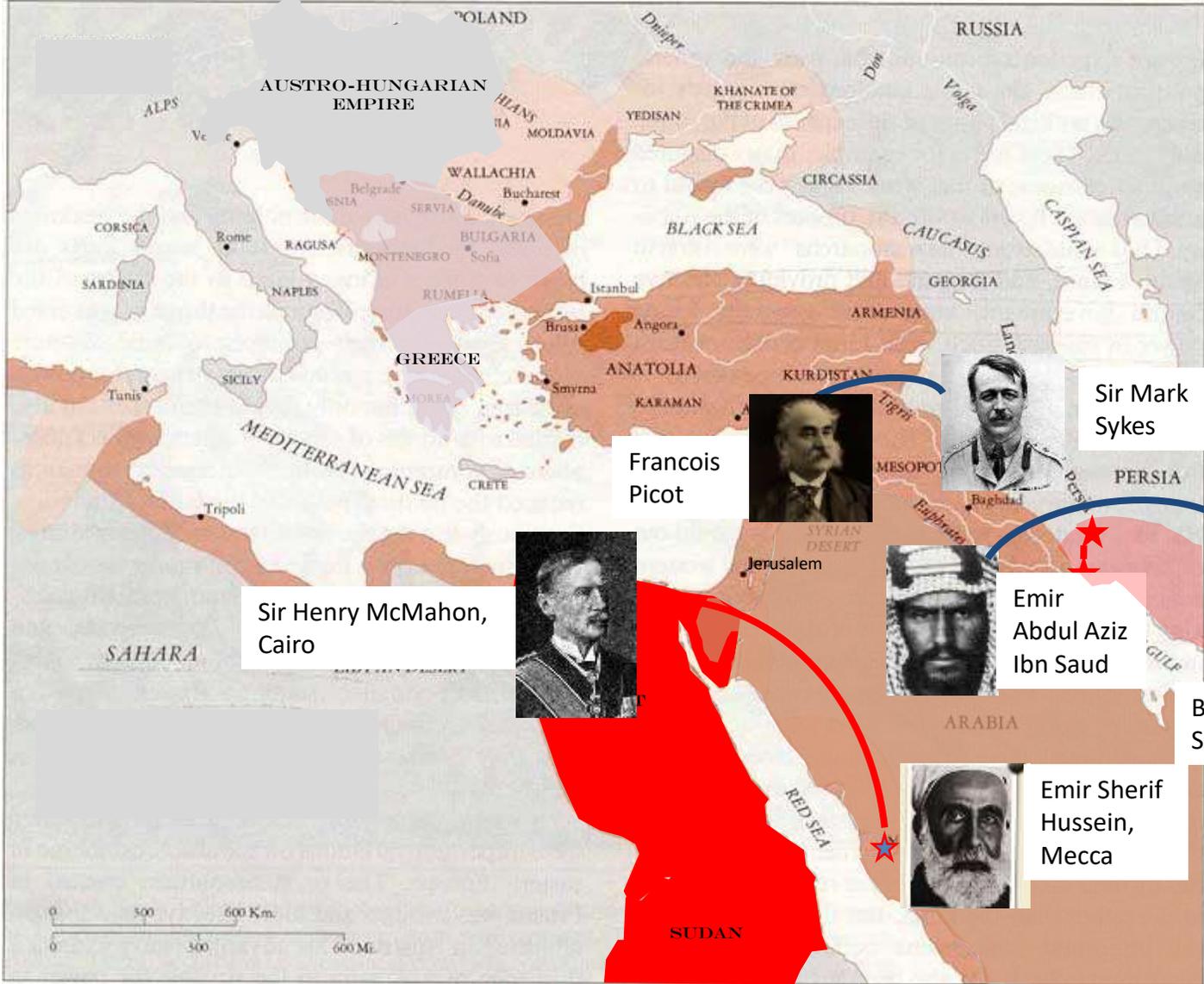
Francois Georges-Picot
France



Sir Mark Sykes
England



Sykes-Picot Agreement



Sir Henry McMahon,
Cairo

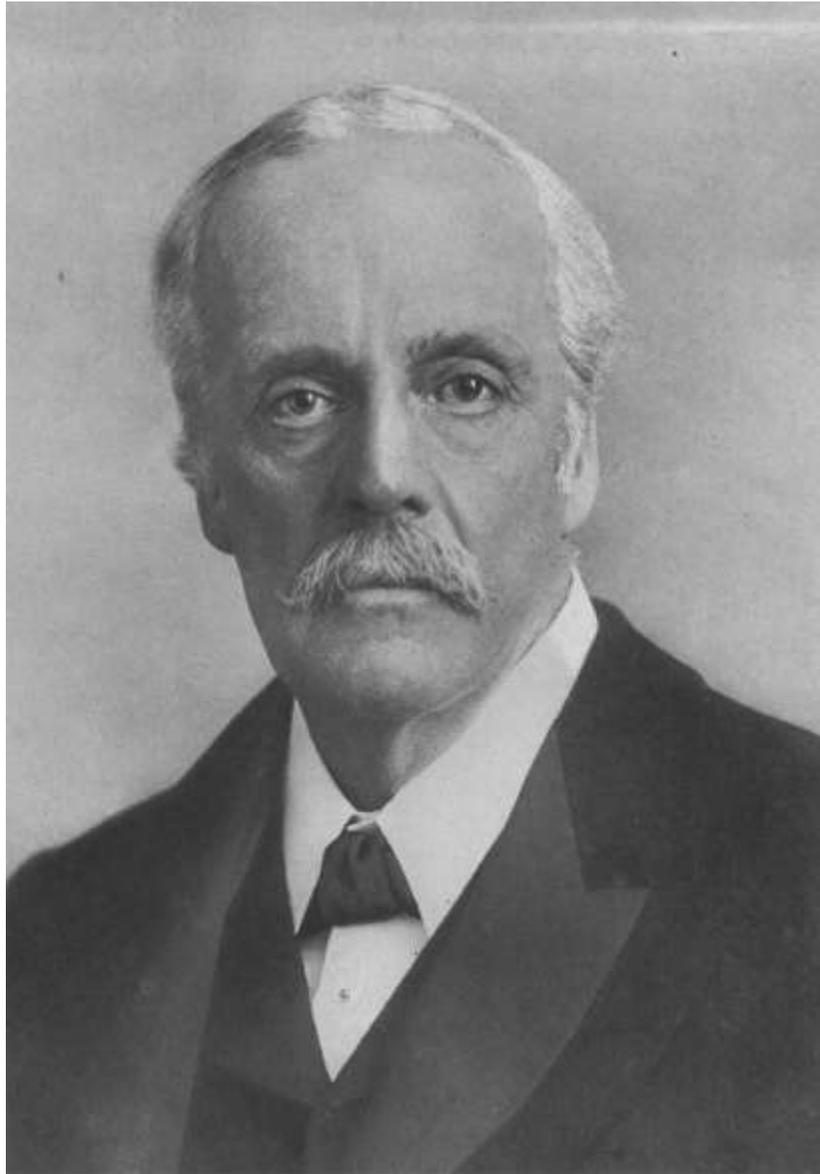
Francois
Picot

Sir Mark
Sykes

Emir
Abdul Aziz
Ibn Saud

Brit-India Resident
Sir Percy Cox

Emir Sherif
Hussein,
Mecca



Arthur James Balfour

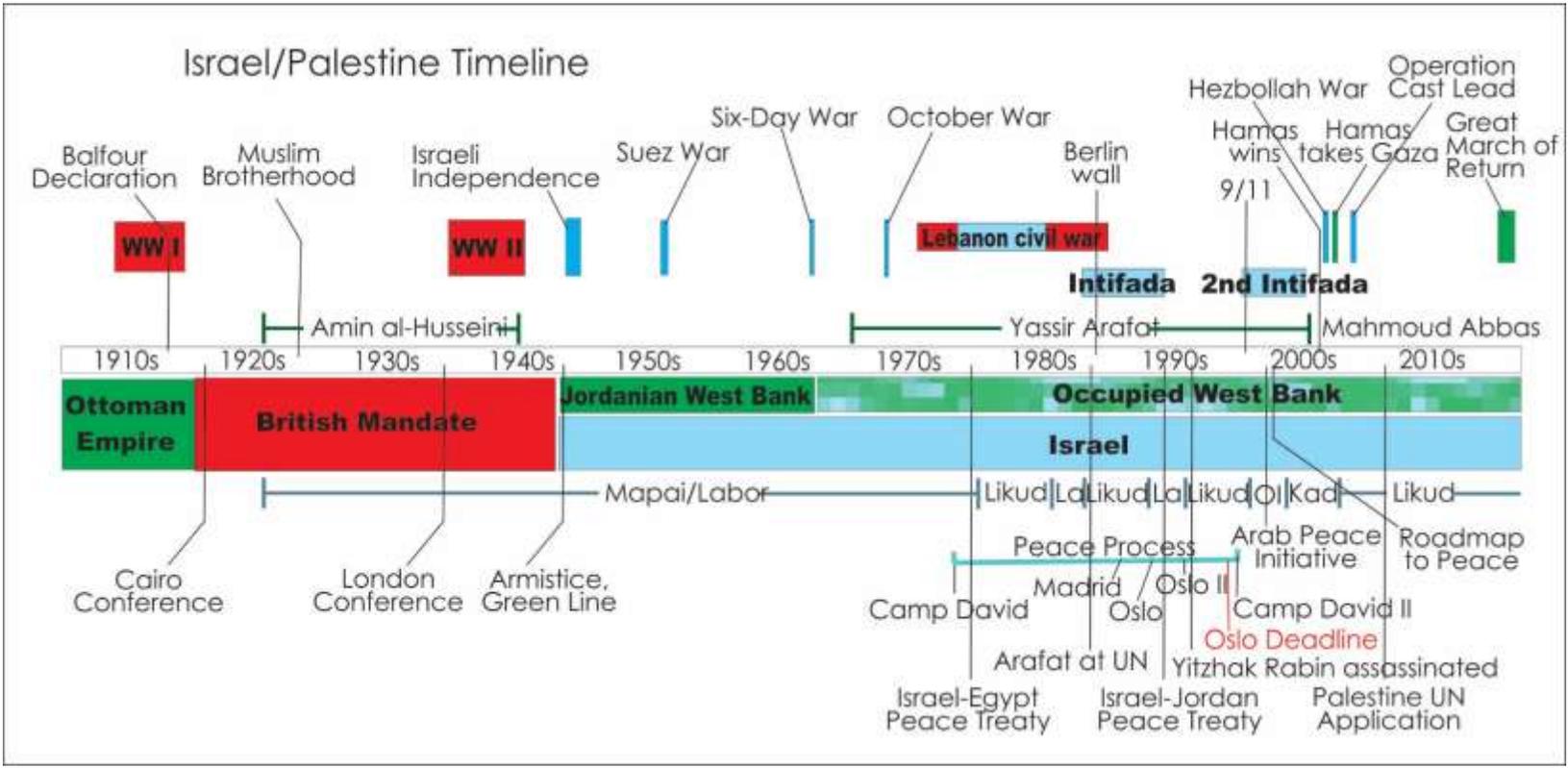


Chaim Weizman



The Middle East at the end of World War I.
British General Edmund Allenby installs Prince Faisal as King of Syria

Israel/Palestine Timeline



Early Jewish and Palestinian struggles



The Middle East at the end of World War I



1920s – 1940s, Ashkenazi Jewish immigration continues—Political Zionism



Nebi Musa riots, Jerusalem, April 1920

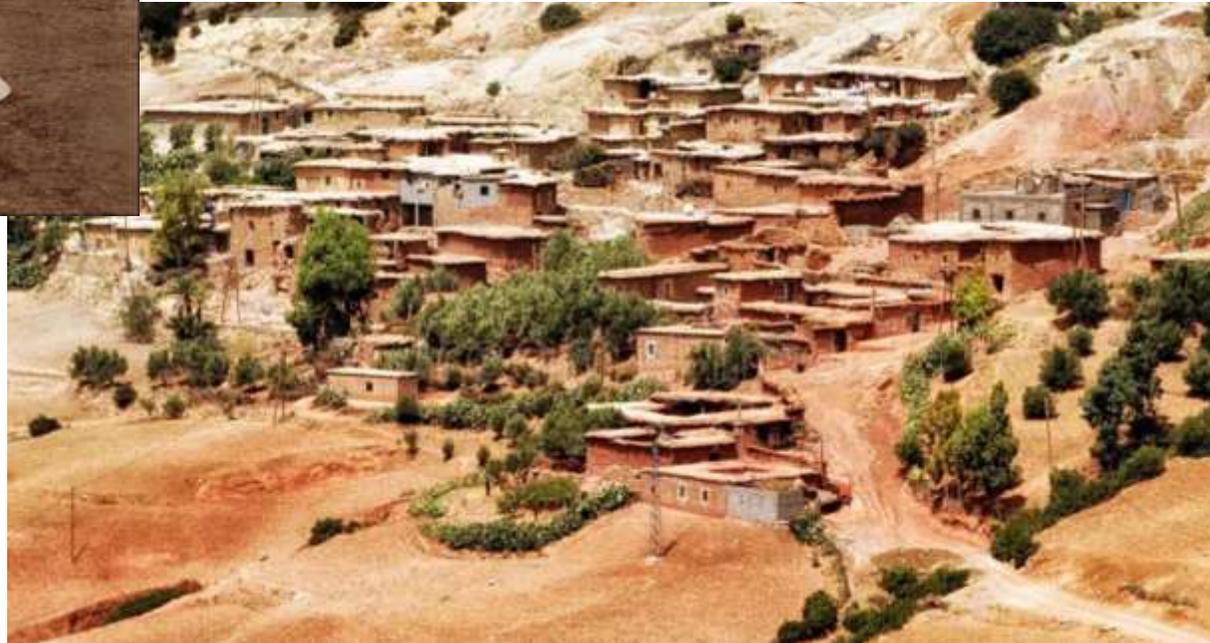


Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky,
founder of Irgun

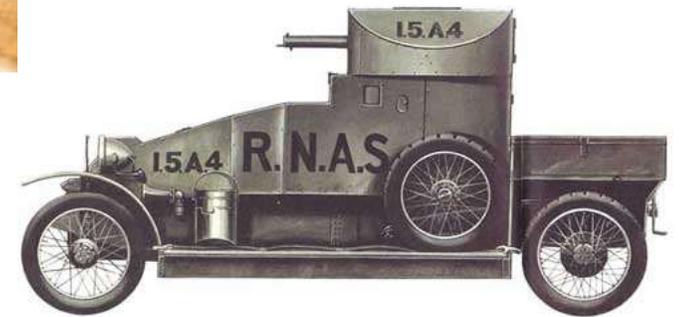




June and July 1920, Iraq and Syria revolt against the British

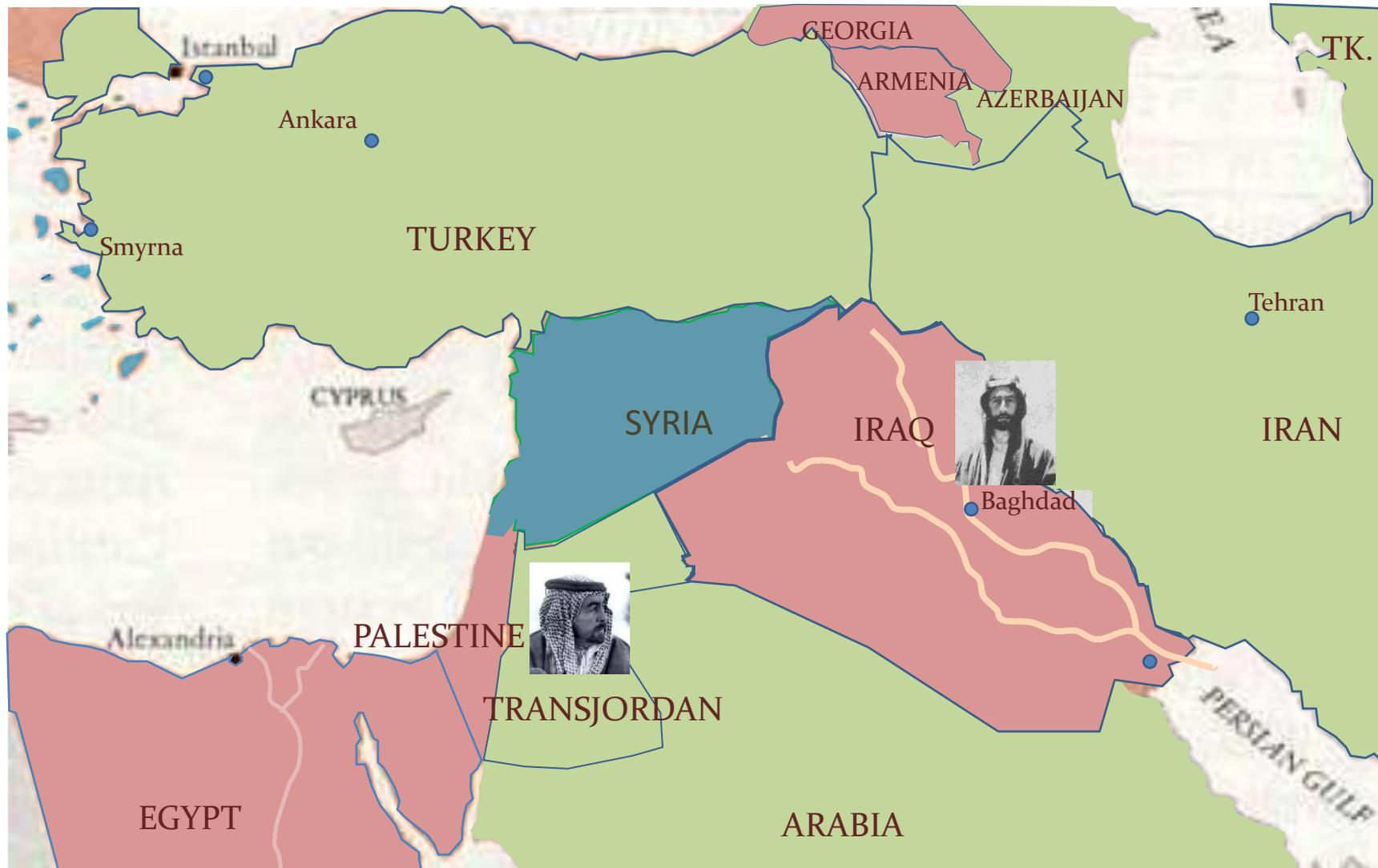


1920 British air power and armored cars suppress the revolts.





Cairo Conference, March 15, 1921



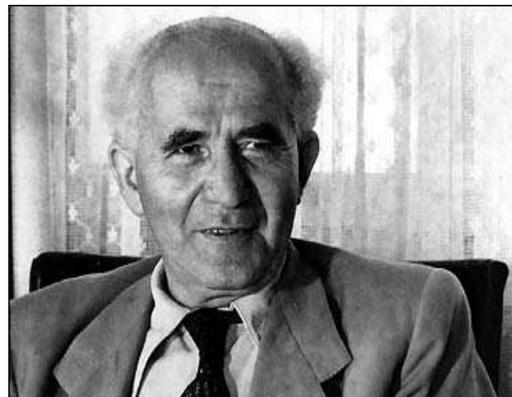
Churchill appoints Feisal King of Iraq and Abdullah King of Jordan, both supported by British air power.



British appoint Hajj Amin al-Husseini Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.



Hebron Massacre
August 23, 1929



David Ben Gurion, appointed head of
The Jewish Agency in Palestine in 1935



Izz ad-Din al-Qassam.
His death started the
Arab Revolt of 1936-
1939.



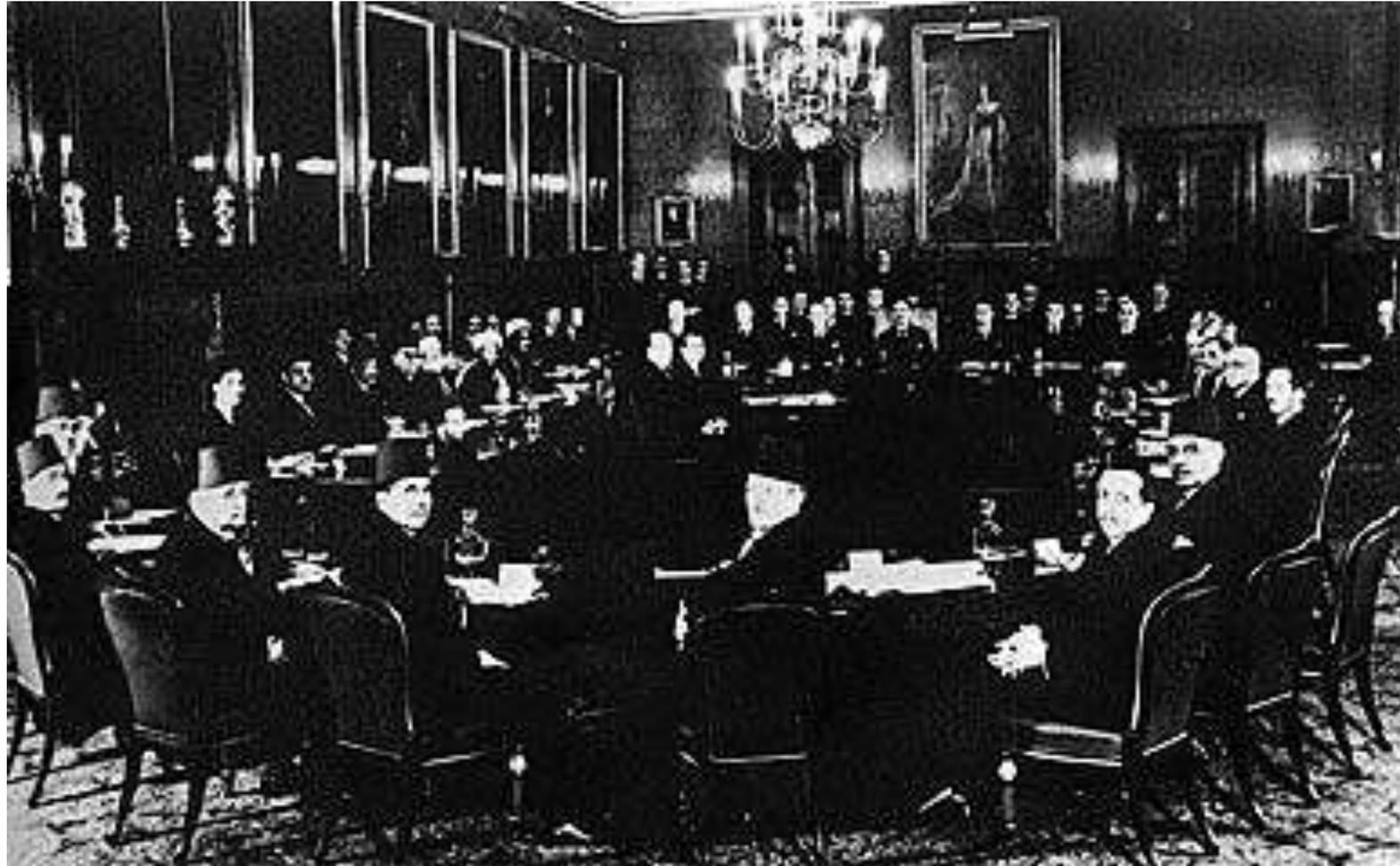
Palestinian fighters in the 1936 – 1939 Arab Revolt against the British.

The British brought in the battleship HMS Malaya to shell Palestinian positions and neighborhoods.





Peel Commission plan, 1937 (Palestinians and Zionists refuse)

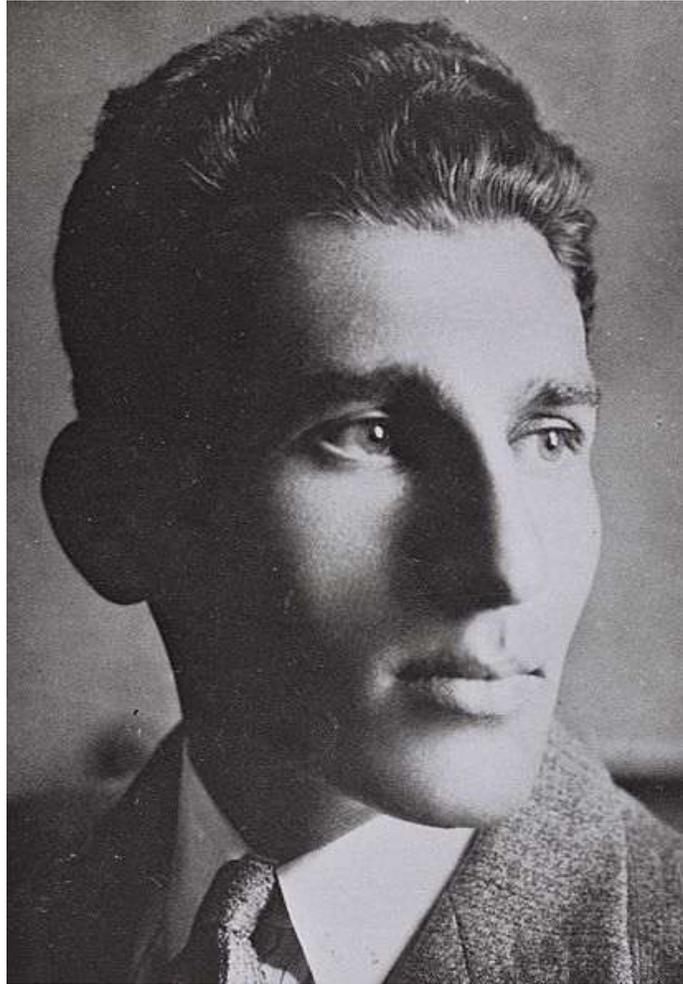


London Conference, 1939

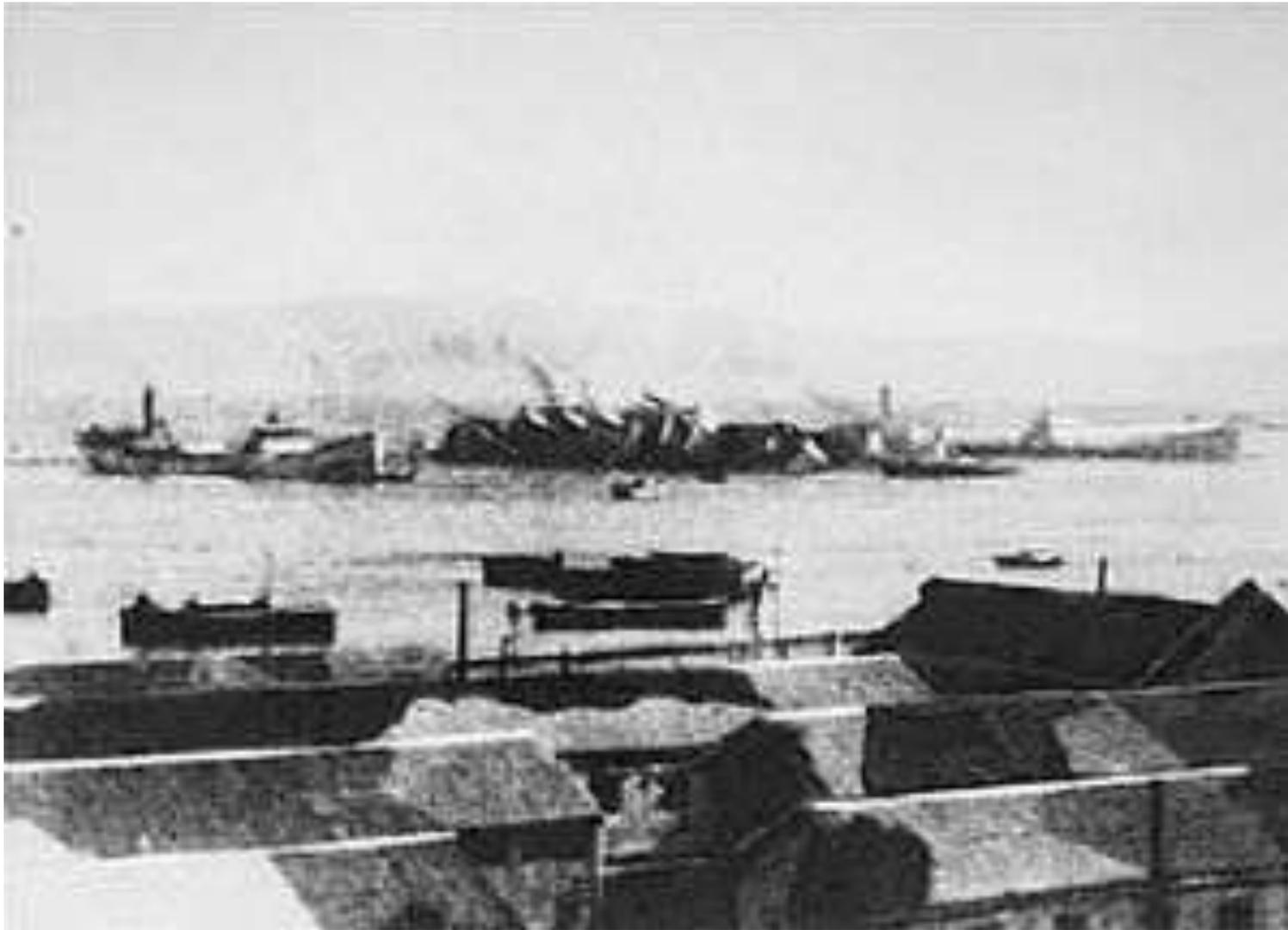
World War II



Jabotinsky's Irgun begins illegal immigration of Jews from Nazi Germany and Central Europe, exceeding the British quotas.



August 1940, Avraham Stern forms an admittedly terrorist paramilitary organization called Lehi, to drive the British out of Palestine.

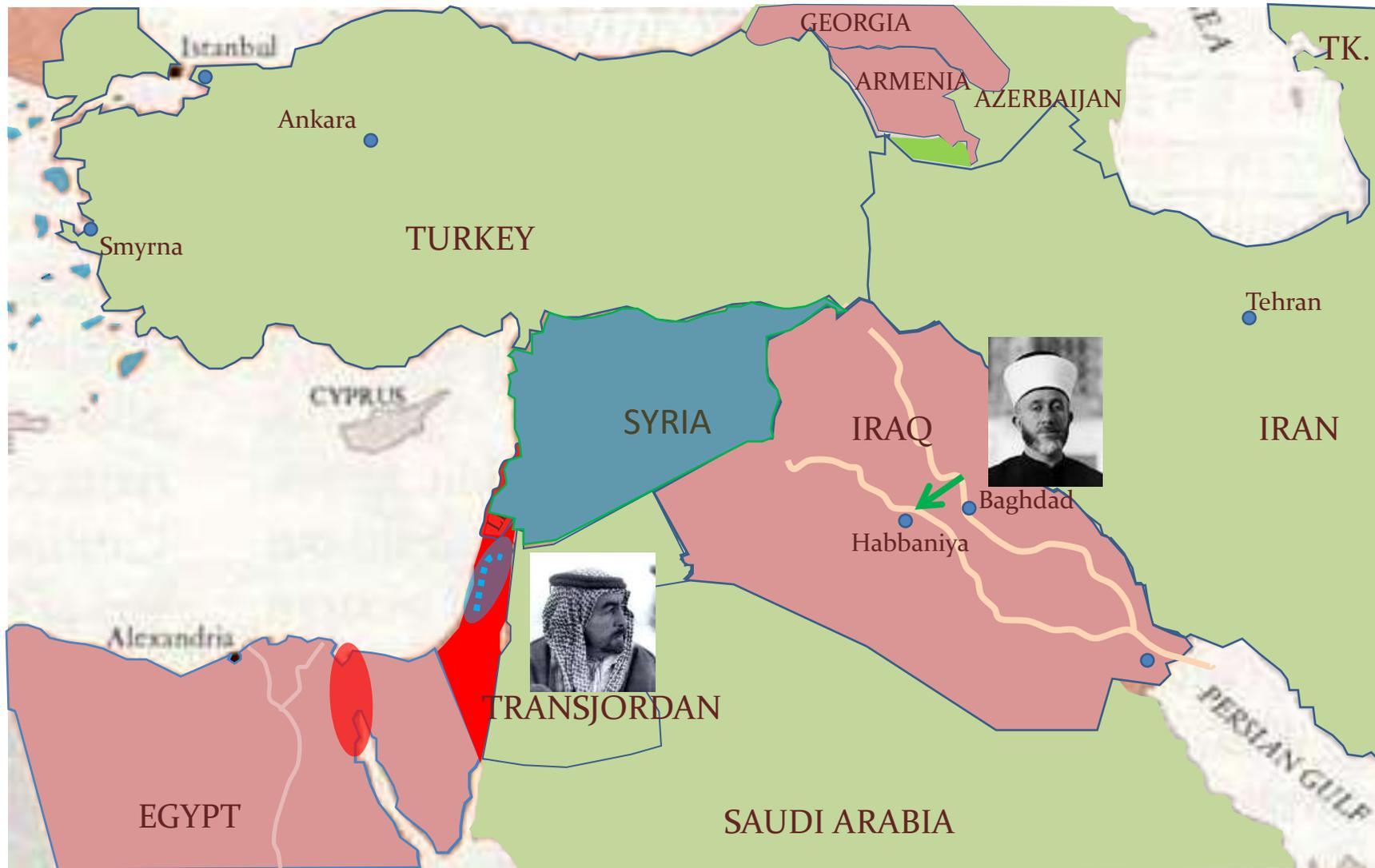


Patria sinking in Haifa harbor. 267 killed.

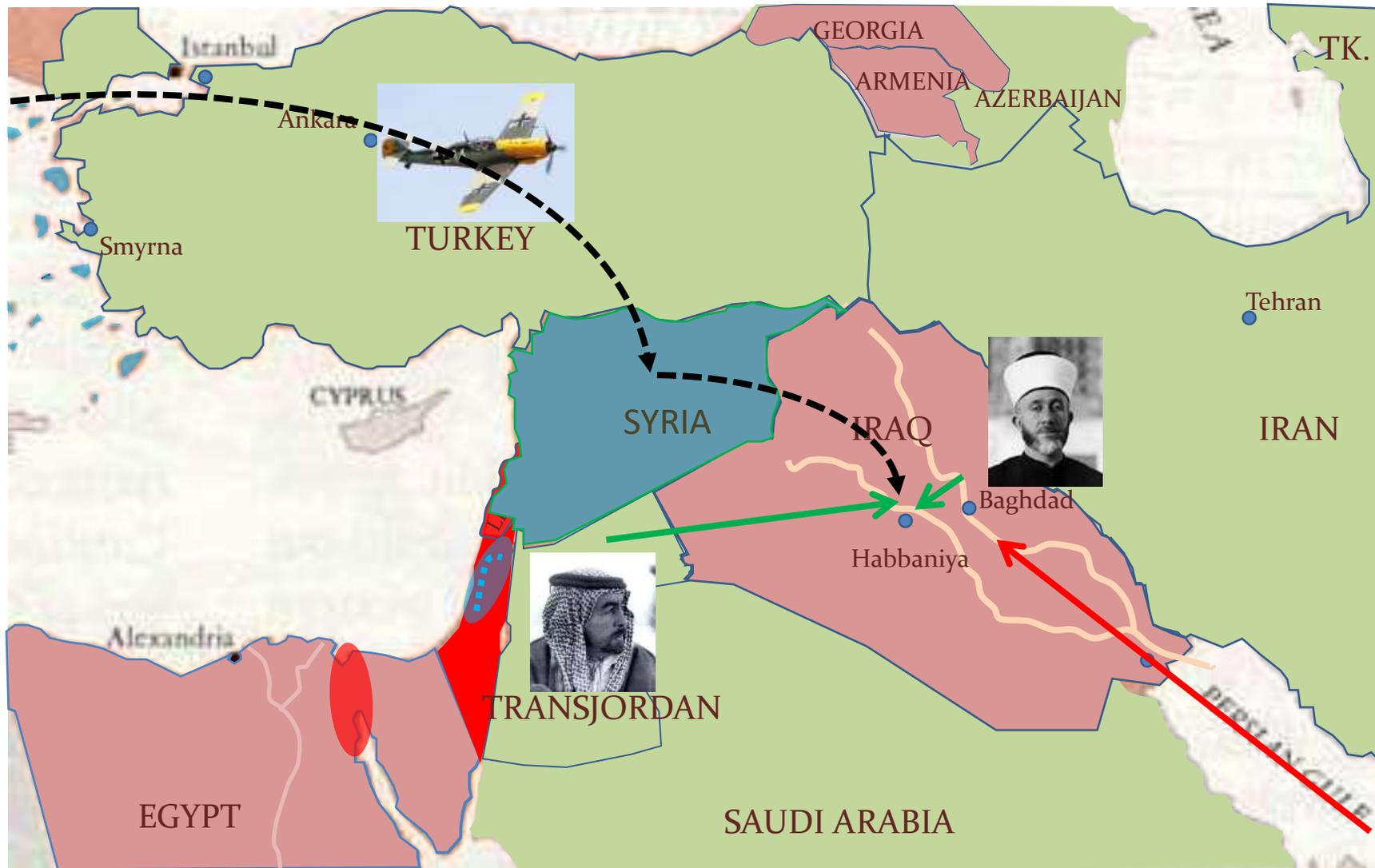


Lord Moyne, British
Foreign Secretary for the
Middle East, assassinated
by Lehi





April, 1941 "Golden Square" officers and Haj Amin al-Husseini, attack British Habbaniya air base



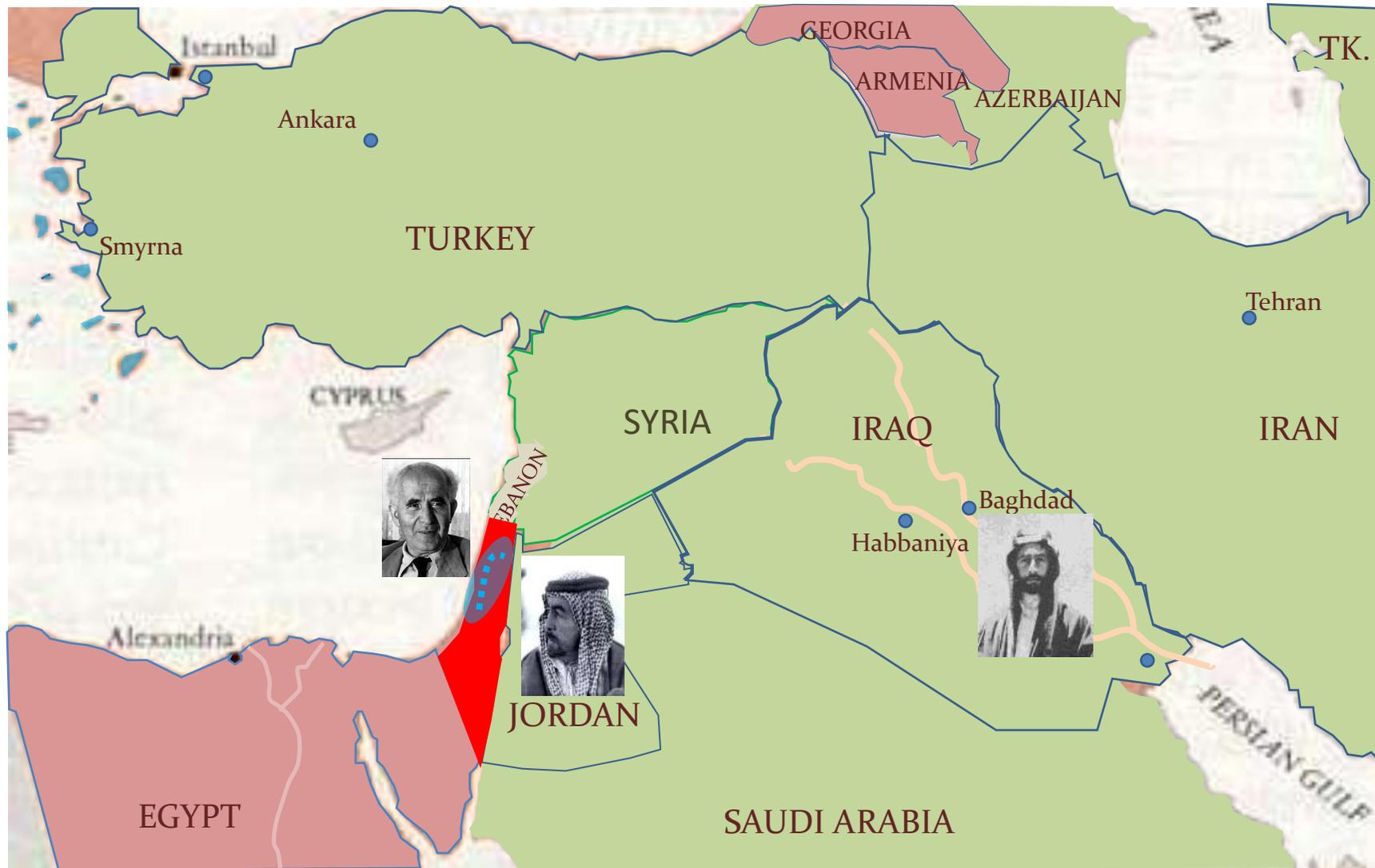
Arab Legion from TransJordan and British reinforcements from India suppress the “Golden Square” coup.



Hajj Amin al-Husseini,
Grand Mufti of Jerusalem



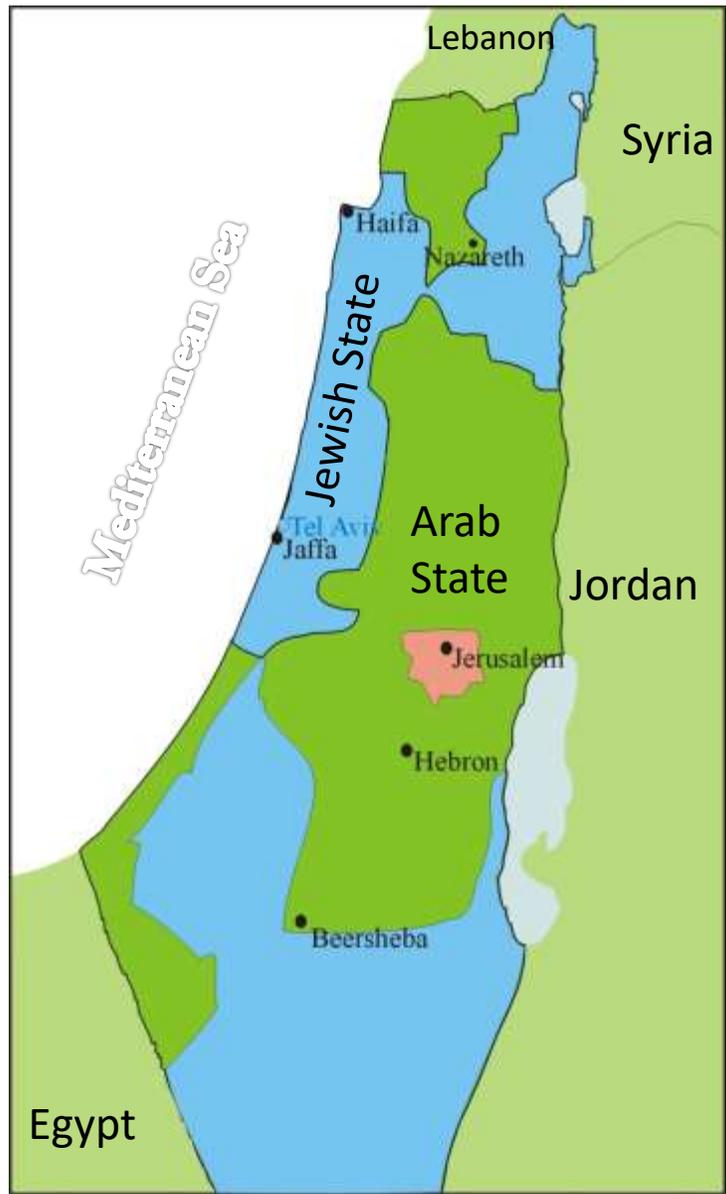
...inspecting SS troops in Croatia



May 1945, Syria and Lebanon independent.
May 25, 1946 Jordan independent.
1946, Allies withdraw from Iraq and Iran.



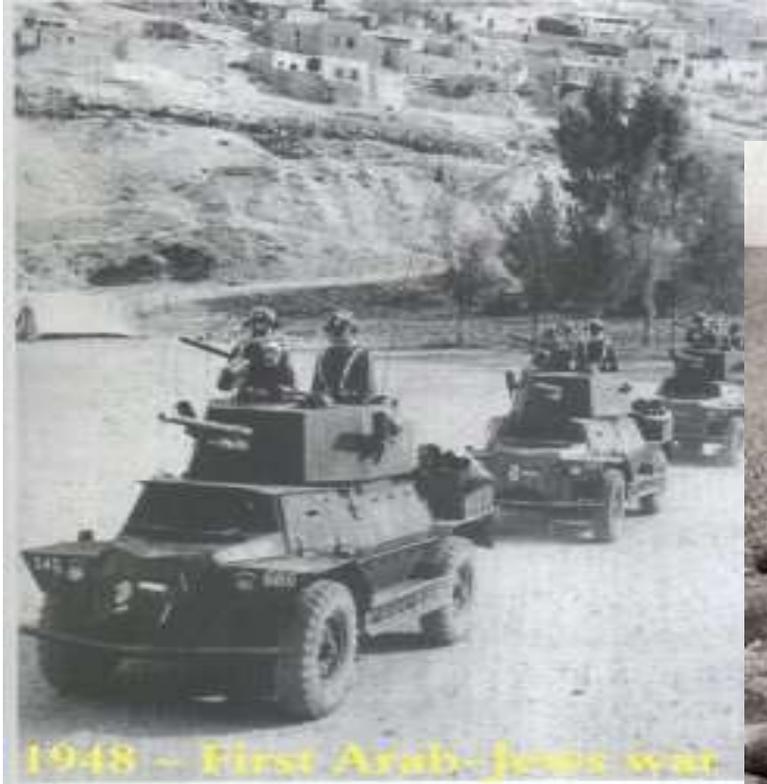
Jewish Revolt, 1946-1948
King David Hotel bombed by Irgun, 1947. 91 killed.



U.N. Partition Plan, Nov 29, 1947
42% Arab, 56% Jewish (Arabs refuse)

Israeli War for Independence

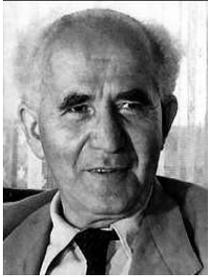
1948 Israeli War for Independence



Israeli armored vehicles, 1948



Israeli field artillery, 1948



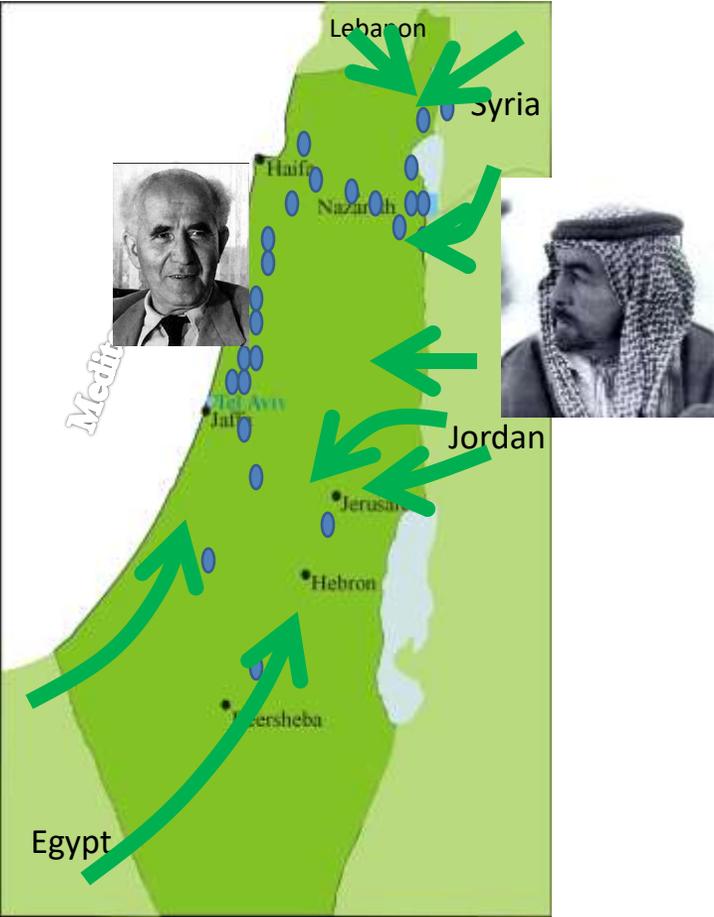
David Ben-Gurion,
founder of the
Mapai/Labor
party.



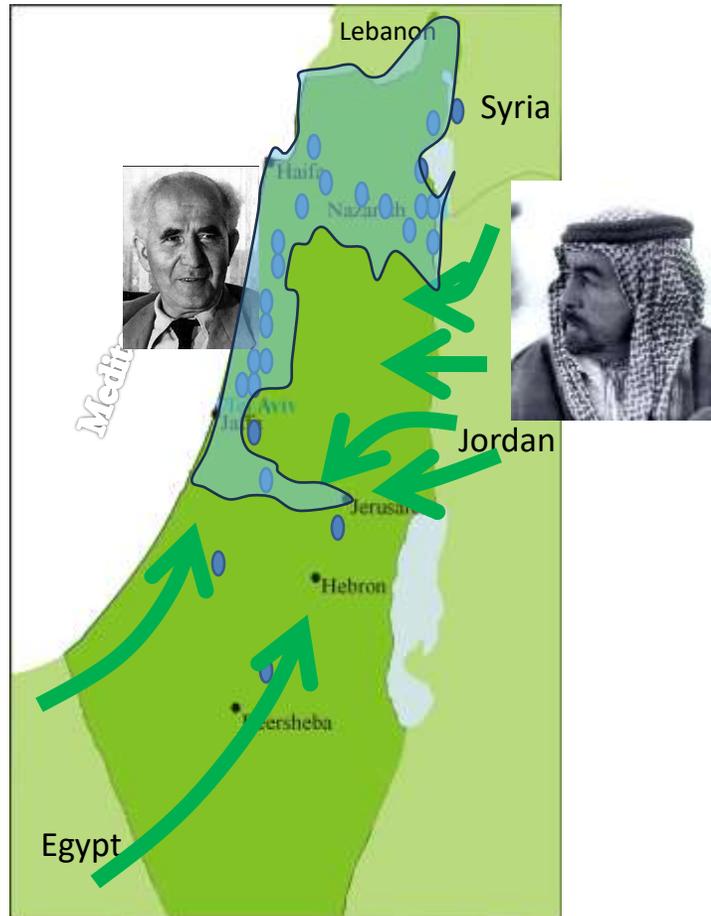
David Ben-Gurion declares the State of Israel, May 14, 1948



Harry Truman recognizes the new state of Israel, May 15, 1948



May 16, 1948, Arab armies attack



June, 1948, Arab Legion takes “West Bank” and Jerusalem,
Hagenah holds off Egypt and Syria



Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte



Bernodette's first plan: the 1947 UN plan with Palestine annexed to Jordan, with a Jewish "enclave."



Bernodette's first plan: the 1947 UN plan with Palestine annexed to Jordan, with a Jewish "enclave."

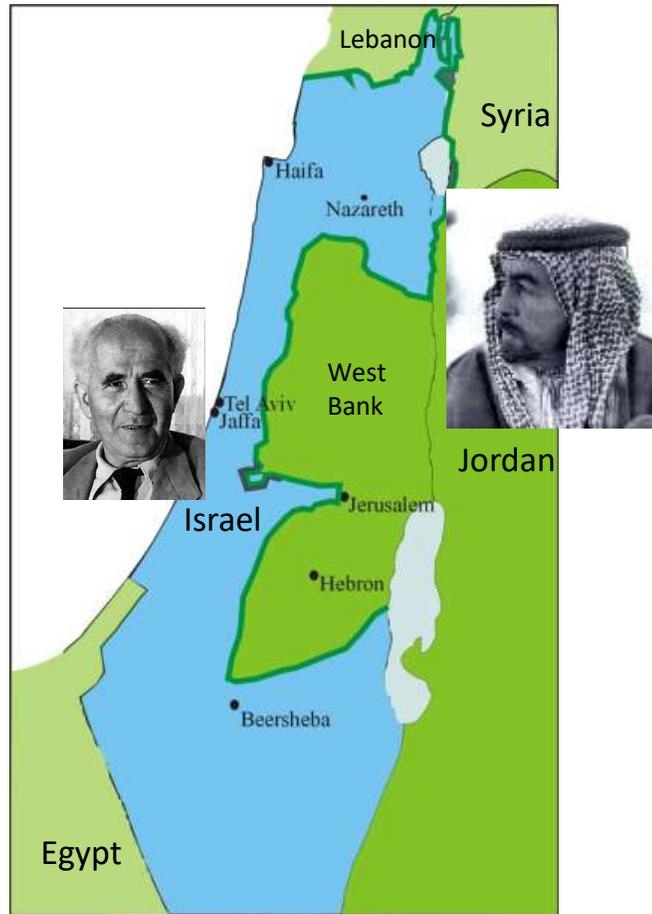


Bernodette's second plan: a Jewish state with the rest of Palestine annexed to Jordan.

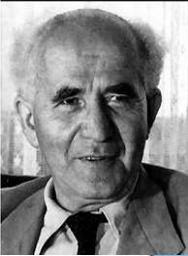


Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte
assassinated by Lehi





The Green Line, drawn in the 1949 Armistice Agreements.



King Abdullah of Jordan,
assassinated in Jerusalem,
7/20/1951 by a cousin of
Mufti Hajj Amin al-Husseini



Palestinian refugees, 1948



Bethlehem camp, 1956

45 UNRWA Palestinian refugee camps by 1950.
(Several are off-map in Lebanon and Syria.)

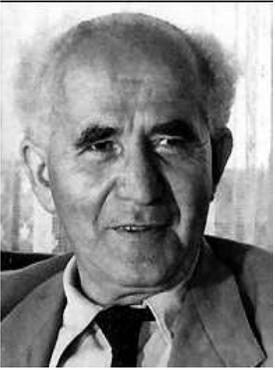


Entrance to Aida Refugee Camp, Bethlehem



Abandoned homes, Haifa, Israel.

Mizrahi Immigration



David Ben-Gurion,
founder of the
Mapai/Labor
party.



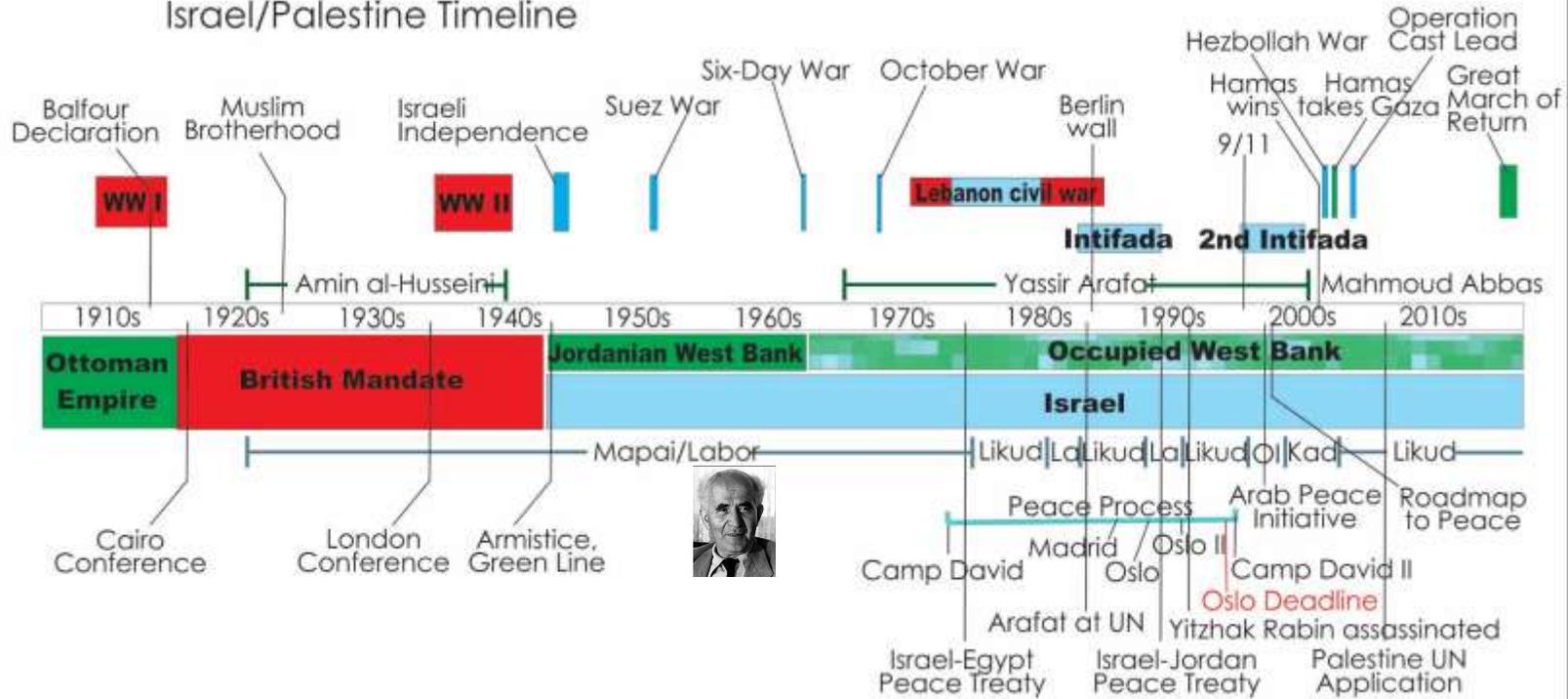
Late 1800s – 1940s, Ashkenazi Jewish immigration

Late 1940s – 1980s, Mizrahi Jewish immigration



Menachem Begin,
founder of the
Herut/Likud
party.

Israel/Palestine Timeline



Israeli Governance

Israel governance:

Basic Law and constitution

Parliamentary democracy

Supreme Court

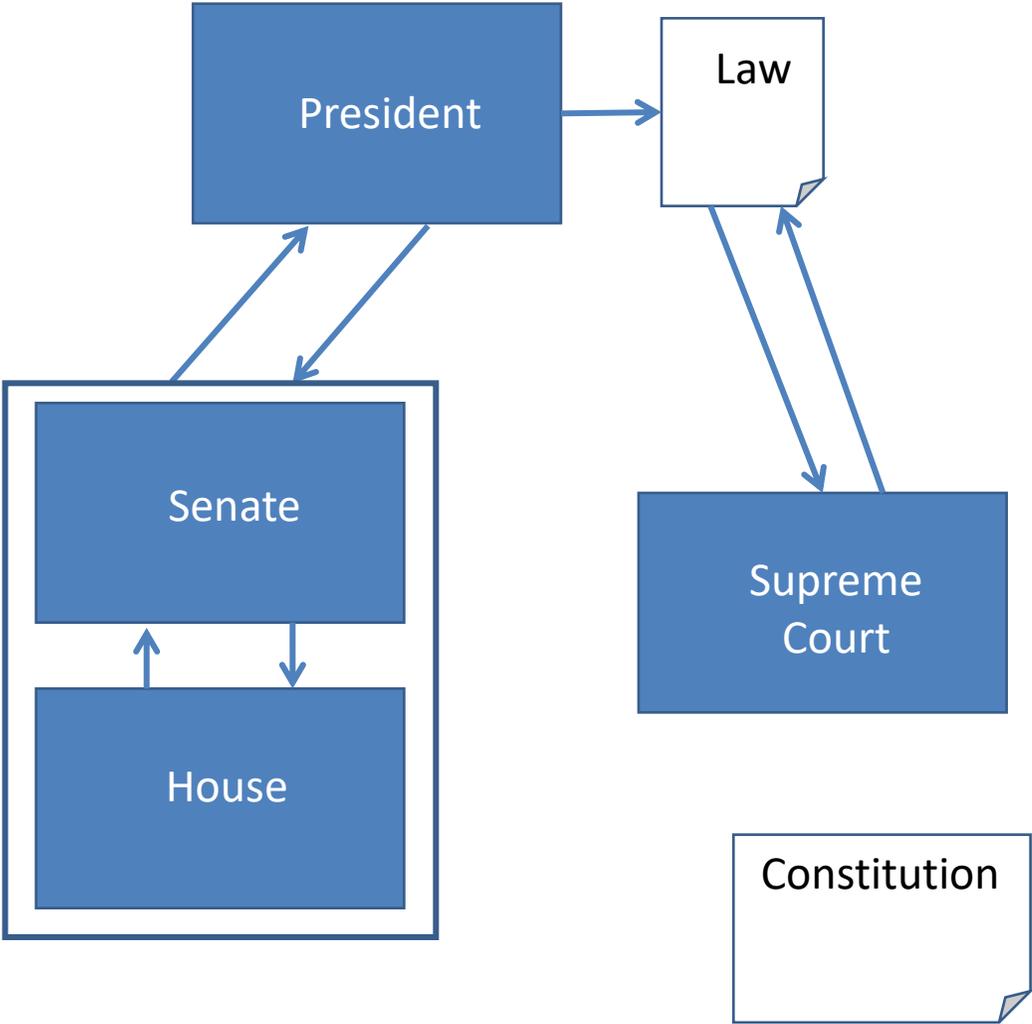
Office of the Chief Rabbinate

The Law of Return

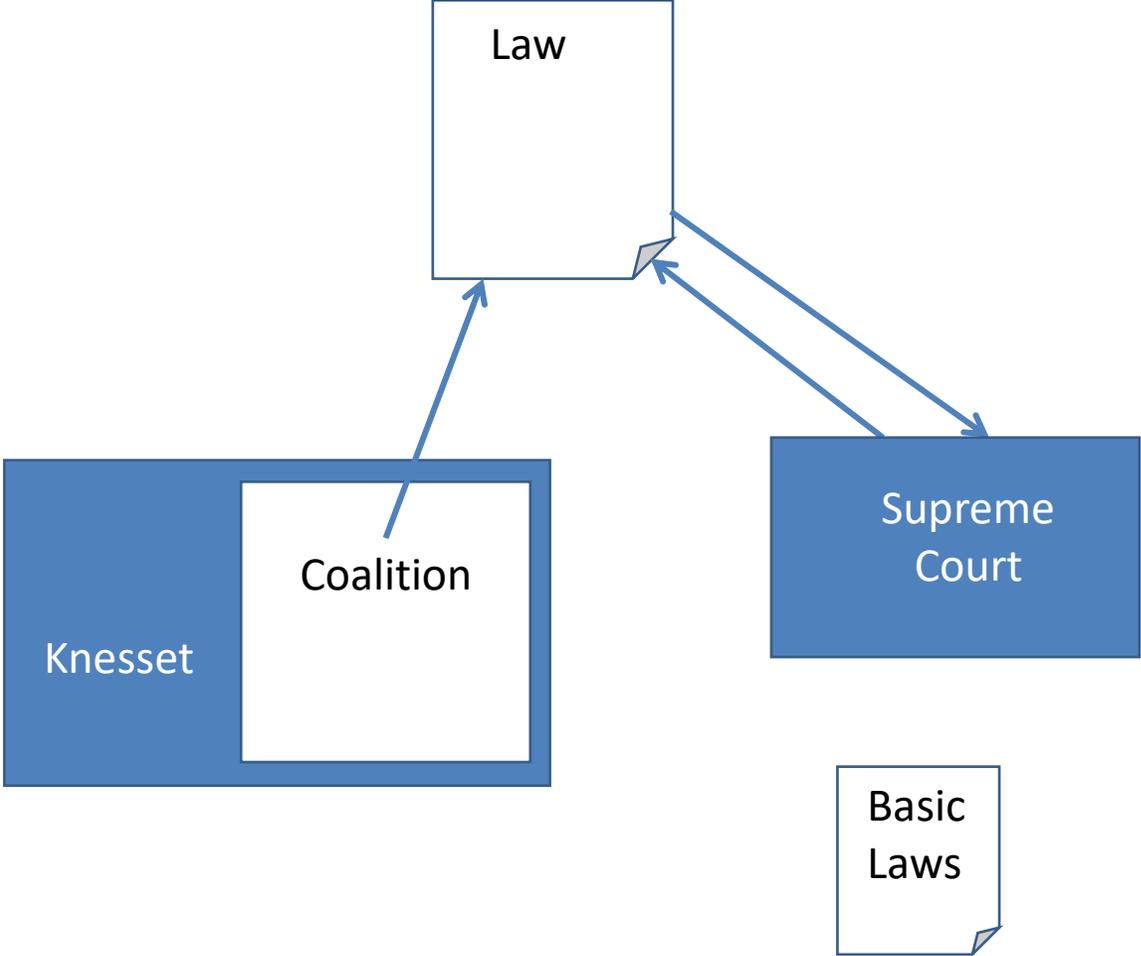
PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

- Elected President (Head of State).
- Elected Parliament (Knesset).
- Prime Minister selected by the President.
- Cabinet assembled by the Prime Minister, to form a coalition.
- Failure to maintain a majority in the Knesset results in new elections.

U.S. Democracy

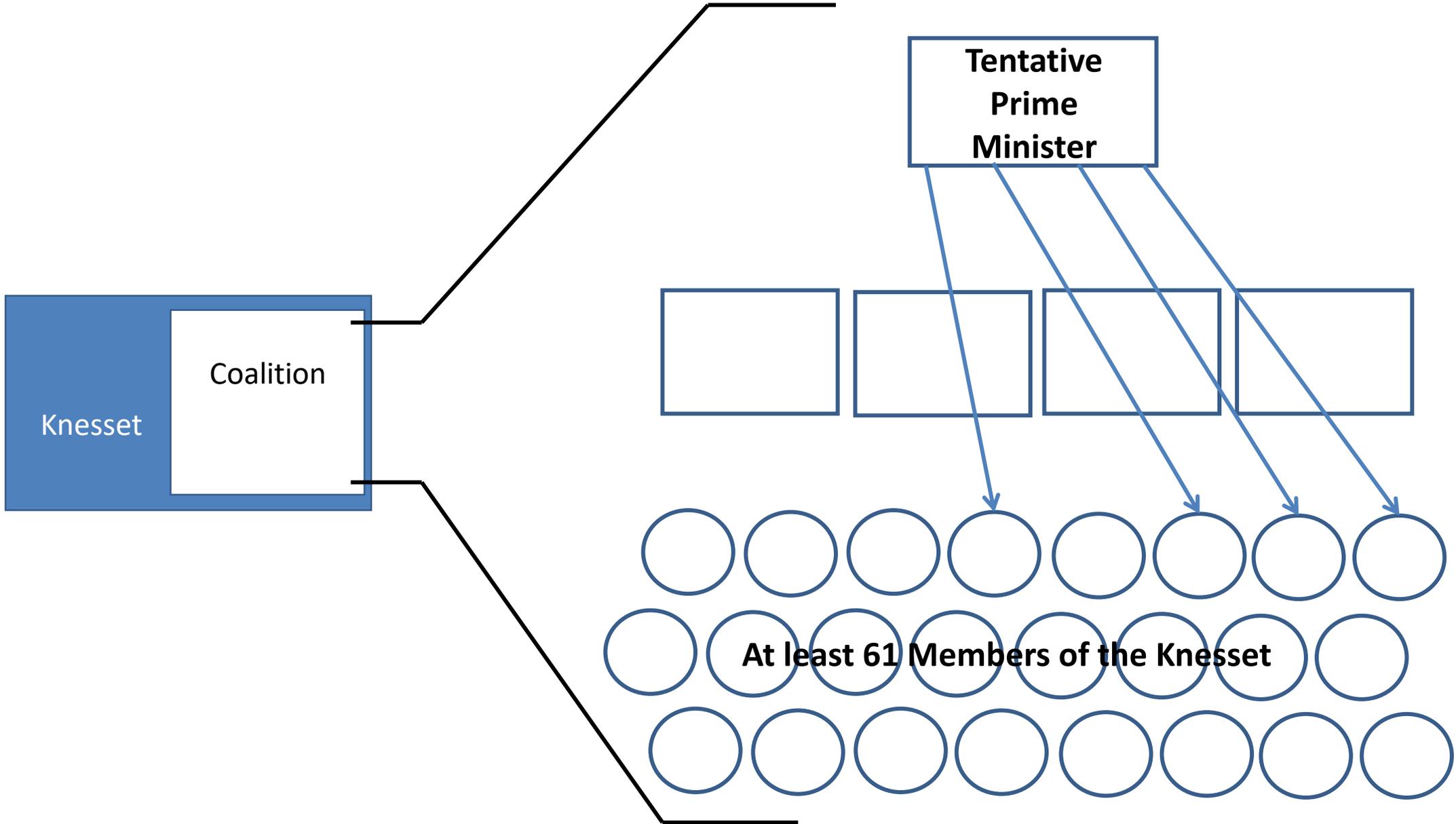


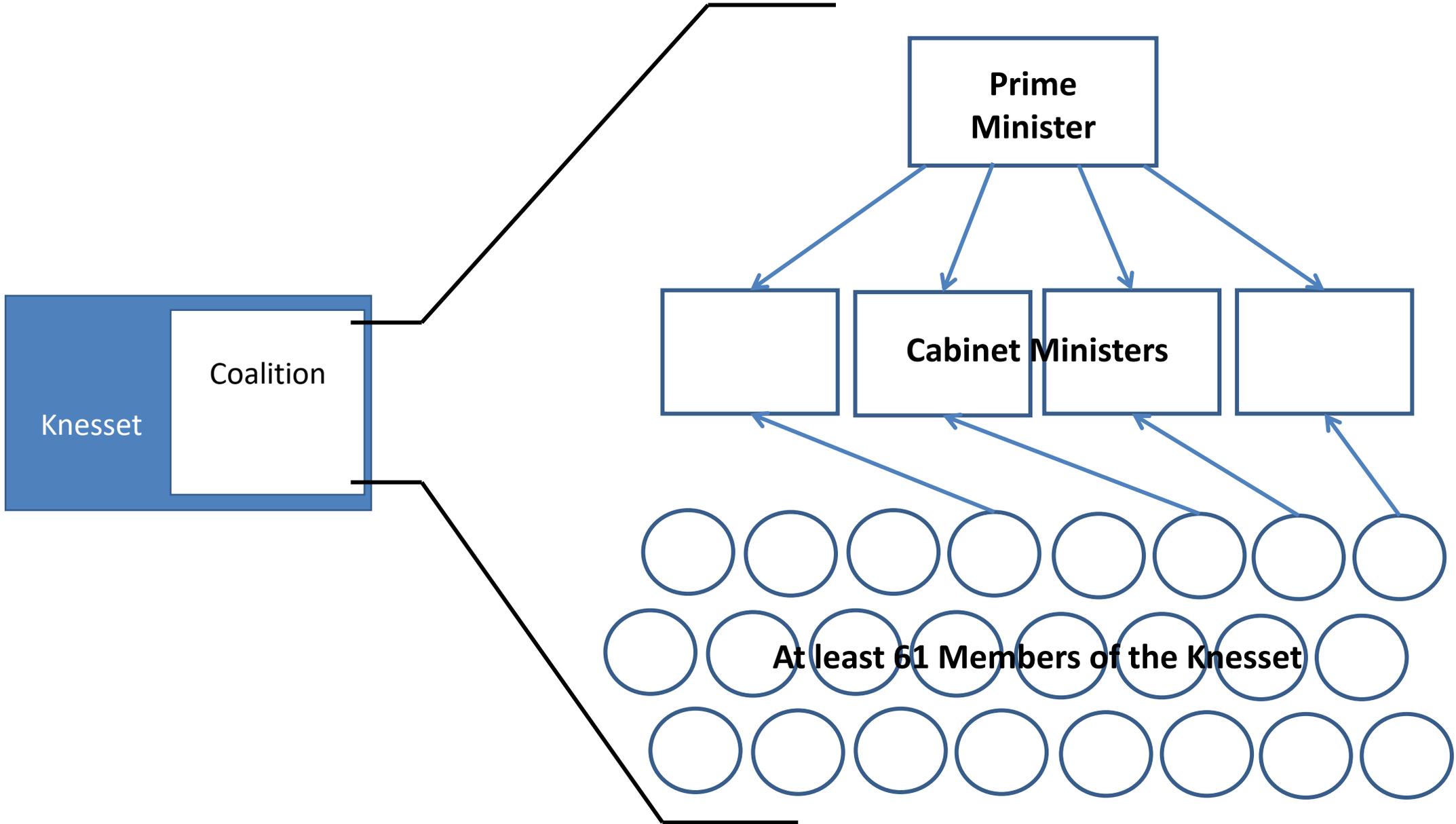
Israeli Democracy





Israeli ballot envelope and voting slips.





**Prime
Minister**

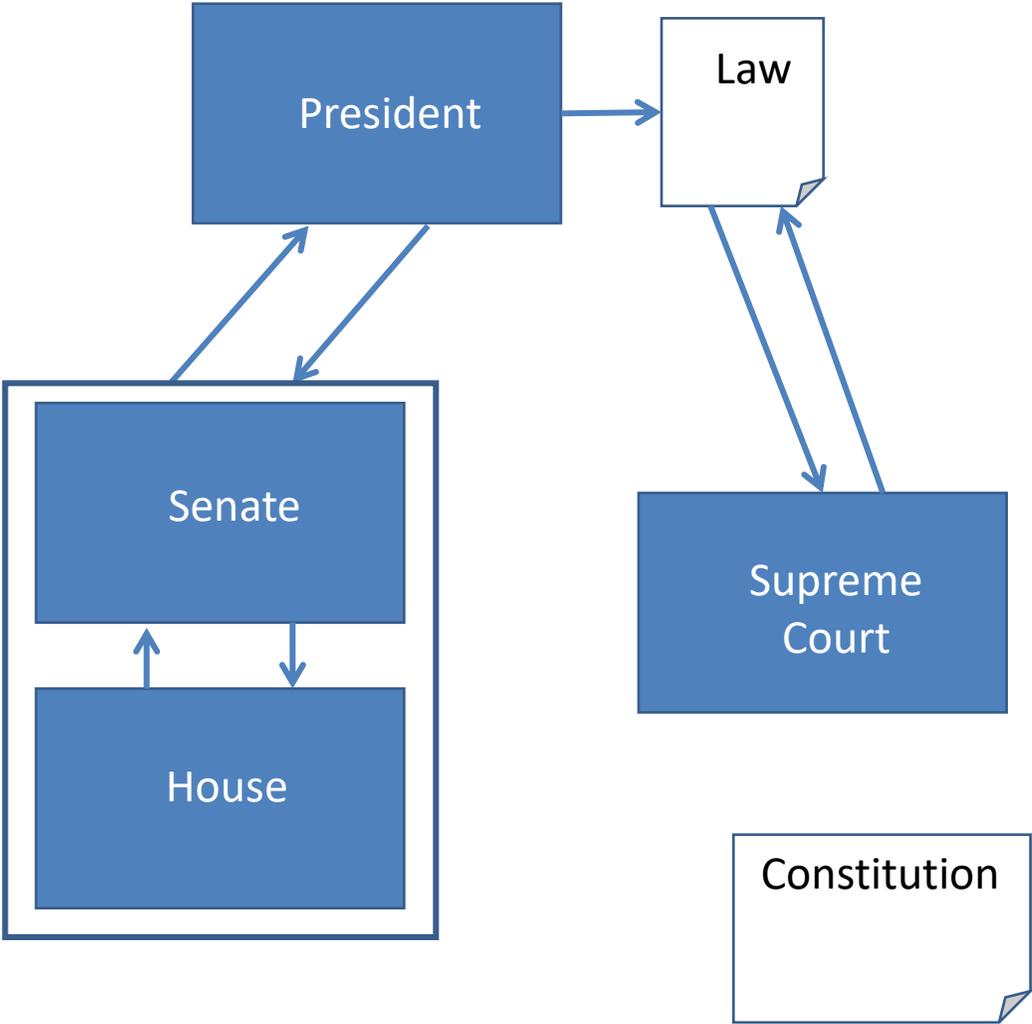
Coalition

Knesset

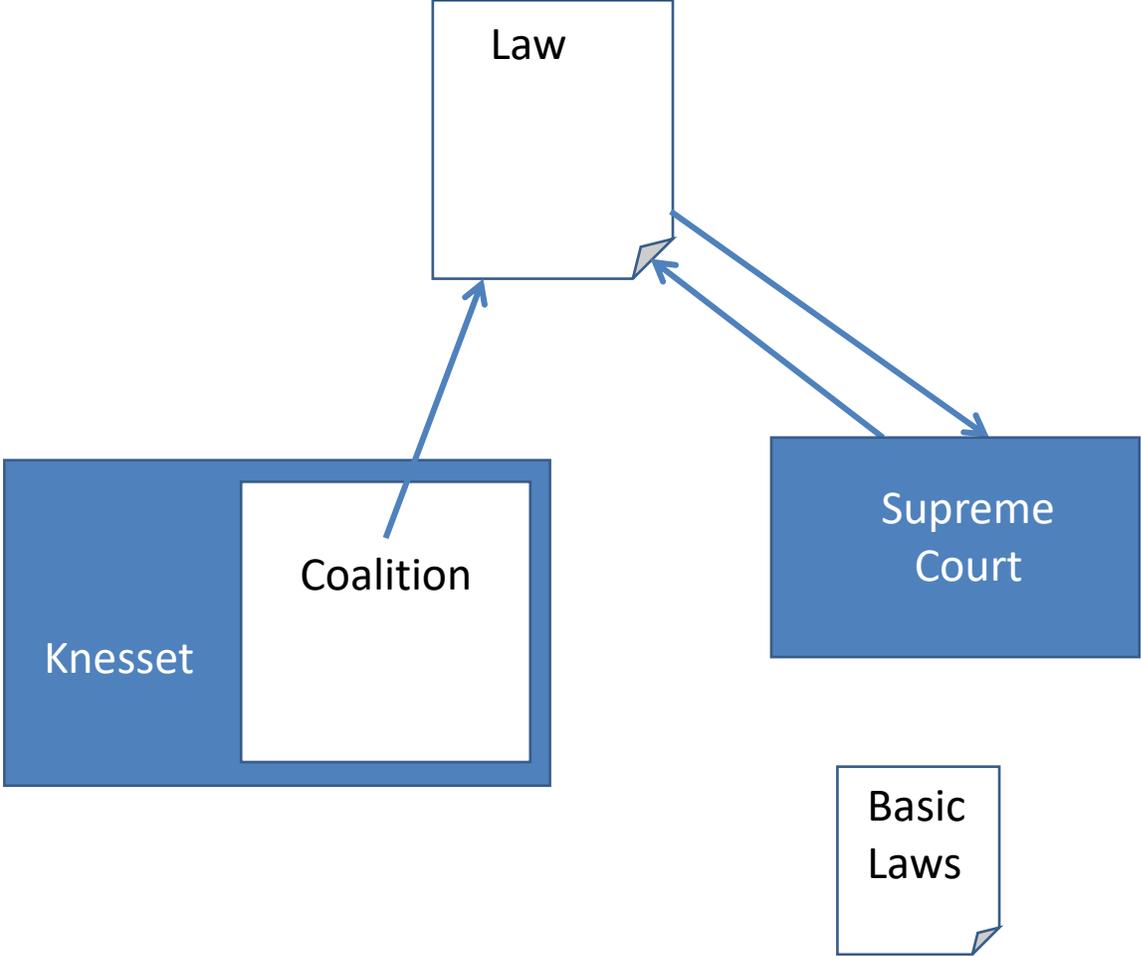
Cabinet Ministers

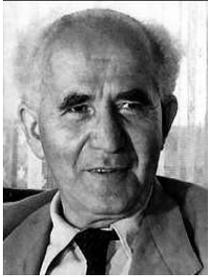
At least 61 Members of the Knesset

U.S. Democracy



Israeli Democracy





Ultra-Orthodox get special status as religious students and leaders. Exempt from military service. Given stipends to pursue religious studies.



Israel governance:

Basic Law and constitution

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The Law of Return

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