

## TIMELINE: A Gordian Knot

**1936** The Arabs revolt. Ben-Gurion insists on a policy of “havlagah,” or self-restraint. Jews would not go on the offensive but only defend themselves from attack.

**1936** On November 11, the Peel Commission arrives in Palestine. Its mission is to investigate the causes of the violence. Chaim Weizmann gives a good speech in the public proceedings but a mixed message in a private one. Ben-Gurion becomes convinced that Weizmann cannot be trusted to carry out Zionist policy.

**1939** In May, Britain issues a White Paper that limits Jewish immigration. Its purpose is to put an end to hopes for a Jewish National Home.

**1939** In September, When Britain and France declare war on Germany, Ben-Gurion comes up with a famous formula: “We must help the British in their war against Hitler as though there were no White Paper, and we must resist the White Paper as though there were no war!” In reality, only the first part is implemented during the war.

**1942** In May in New York City, Ben-Gurion addresses the Biltmore Conference. Delegates demand that Palestine be established as a Jewish commonwealth after the war.

**1944** Ben-Gurion calls upon the Yishuv to turn members of the underground Irgun over to the British.

**1945** War ends. David Ben-Gurion is free to fight Britain’s White Paper policy.