

TIMELINE: The High Commissioner

1918 Immediately upon taking control of Palestine, the British military administration follows an anti-Zionist policy. The message sent to the Arabs is that the Balfour Declaration can be ignored.

1920 Arabs riot in Jerusalem. The British military authorities arrest a group of Jews who defended Jerusalem during the attacks. They are sentenced to long prison terms.

1920 The British government, still sympathetic to Zionism, puts an end to the military administration. Demonstrating its good intentions, the government appoints British politician Herbert Samuel as the civil administration's first High Commissioner for Palestine.

1920 Samuel's first official act as High Commissioner is to amnesty the Jewish defenders of Jerusalem. However, Samuel also pardons two Arab rapists who had taken part in the violence against Jews.

1921 Samuel appoints Haj Amin el-Husseini as Grand Mufti of Jerusalem despite his involvement in the 1920 Arab Riots. Samuel puts el-Husseini in charge of the Supreme Muslim Council, an institution created by the British, which exerts almost complete control over Muslim schools, religious courts and their funding.

1921 On May 1, Arabs riot in Jaffa and attack Jewish villages and towns throughout the country. Ninety-five are killed and 219 seriously wounded. Samuel bows to Arab pressure that Jewish immigration be halted.

1922 Samuel authors the Churchill White Paper. It dilutes the meaning of the Balfour Declaration, stating that His Majesty's government never intended that Palestine become 'as Jewish as England is English'.

1925 Samuel resigns from his post.

1929 Arabs riot, massacring the Jew of Hebron. Responsibility lies with Haj Amin El-Husseini whose incitement against Jews focused on Muslim religious sentiment.

1930 The Passfield White Paper is issued. It calls for limiting Jewish immigration and restricting land sales to Jews.