

British government promises

[History](#)



British Government Promises British Government Promises As a colonial power, the British government was involved in a variety of promises and agreements across the world in respective regions. Some agreements were real while others were fake, with an aim of individual gain as opposed to mutual benefit among parties. The paper examines three promises, their conflicts and possible reasons behind such promises.

The first one relates to Hussein-McMahon Agreement that occurred in October 1915 where the Palestinians accepted a promise from the British government that Arab nationals will be allocated the land that was previously held by the Turks under Ottoman Empire once the World War One was over. The British encouraged the Arab nationals under the Ottoman Empire to revolt against the Turkish lords. The correspondence that Hussein got from McMahon served as a clear indication that Palestinians would receive Palestine once the war was completed (MacQueen, 2013). The next agreement relates to the Sykes-Picot Agreement that occurred in 1916. The agreement was conducted secretly between Britain and France with the two colonial masters making a plan of partitioning the areas covered by the Ottoman Empire immediately when the World War One was done. In the agreement, French gained control of Lebanon as well as Turkish Cilicia with Britain gaining Palestine, Jordan as areas of Bagdad and Persian Gulf. The agreement however failed to indicate complete ownership of the territories, but rather a complete control; through governmental and administrative levels (MacQueen, 2013). Although Russia was part of the allied forces with both France and Britain, Russia failed to take any territory but was aware of the agreement. The last agreement under focus relates to Balfour Declaration that was written in 2nd November 1917 to serve as an

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endorsement of the establishment of a permanent home of Jews with Palestine identified as the destination. The announcement of the agreement occurred after discussions were made within British cabinet and also between Jewish leaders (MacQueen, 2013). The agreement therefore, served in fulfilling the aspirations of Jewish Zionists of having a place where they would call home.

Each of the three agreements had conflicts with the McMahon-Hussein Correspondence agreement evidenced in that the real cause for Britain making the agreement was never disclosed. The real cause was to help defeat the Ottoman Empire in the war that had become an ally of Germany (MacQueen, 2013). Conflict in the Sykes-Picot Agreement is evidenced in the fact that the allies focused on means of dividing the previous Arab lands among themselves as opposed to granting independence and the lands back to Arabs as promised (MacQueen, 2013). The Arabs therefore were left in the dark of the planned actions. The Balfour Declaration conflict results from giving the land previously owned by Arabs to the Jews. Palestine declaration as home to the Jews served in fulfilling the interests of Jewish Zionists as keeping the promise made between Britain and Palestines when the Palestines were encouraged to revolt against the Ottoman Empire.

From a personal point of view, I believe that the reasons behind the British making these promises were based on selflessness and individual gain. First, Britain was wary of Germany and Ottoman Empire support for Germany and thus involved the Arabs to help in the war. Secondly, the British were still interested in the territory previously held by the Ottoman Empire. Lastly, the Jewish Zionists were more connected to the British and therefore, favored more and their wishes fulfilled against the Arabs.

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References

MacQueen, B. (2013). An introduction to middle east politics. London: Sage Publications.