



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

**Wednesday 6 October 2021 – Morning**

**A Level History A**

**Y321/01 The Middle East 1908–2011: Ottomans to Arab Spring**

**Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes**



**You must have:**

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- Use black ink.
- Write your answer to each question in the Answer Booklet. The question numbers must be clearly shown.
- Fill in the boxes on the front of the Answer Booklet.
- Answer the question in Section A and **any two** questions in Section B.

**INFORMATION**

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [ ].
- Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (\*).
- This document has **4** pages.

**ADVICE**

- Read each question carefully before you start your answer.

**SECTION A**

Read the two passages and then answer Question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of why Britain left Palestine in 1948. [30]

**Passage A**

The two main factors that gravely undermined Britain's position in Palestine were the power of the Yishuv\* and the influence of the United States. The Yishuv had deeply resented the 1939 White Paper and its plan to curtail immigration into Palestine. As the horrors of the Holocaust gradually became known, Zionist resolve to create an independent state hardened. On the ground British authorities were up against the by now unstoppable Jewish push, including brutal attacks by extremist factions calling for an independent state. Revisionist organisations such as the Irgun and Stern Gang directed their attacks on British personnel. Following the Second World War, many countries, especially in the West, declared their full support for an independent Jewish state as a home for Jewish refugees who had survived the Holocaust. Most acutely, Britain faced a growing rift with the US President, Harry Truman, and his constant demand, driven in part by overwhelming sympathy for the plight of Jewish refugees for the relaxation of the 1939 White Paper and the immediate entry into Palestine of 100,000 Jewish immigrants. It was a critical moment. Britain urgently needed US support and financial aid in order to retain any hope of maintaining its status as a great power. Historians agree that all of these issues led Britain in February 1947 to turn for help to the United Nations. Having had enough of bearing the spiralling cost all by itself, Britain was now looking for someone else to take responsibility.

\*Yishuv – the Jewish people living in the region prior to the establishment of the state of Israel.

**Adapted from: M. Bunton, The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict, published in 2013.**

**Passage B**

Terrorist incidents weakened the morale of the British, both in Palestine and at home. Two incidents in the summer of 1947 finally convinced them they should withdraw from Palestine. One was the hanging of two British soldiers in revenge for the execution of three Irgun members: a photograph of the two men hanging from a tree appeared on the front page of several British newspapers. The other incident involved a ship called the *Exodus* which was carrying 4,500 refugees from Europe. It was prevented by the British authorities from landing its passengers in Palestine and was sent back to Europe. This incident attracted widespread publicity, winning much sympathy for the Jewish refugees, and was thus a huge propaganda success for the Zionists. As a result of actions like these, the British authorities suffered worldwide criticism. The British were also exhausted after the war, with food shortages and rationing at home, and could hardly afford to keep 100,000 troops and police in Palestine. After 30 years of trying to solve the problems of Palestine, the British government decided that it would hand it over to the United Nations in May 1948.

**From: M. Scott-Baumann, The Middle East 1908–2011, published in 2016.**

**SECTION B**

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*** To what extent did the reasons for Great Power involvement in war in the Middle East change in the period from 1908 to 2011? **[25]**
- 3\*** 'The attitude of Zionist and Israeli leaders has been the main reason why it has been so difficult to find a solution to the Palestinian issue in the period from 1908 to 2011.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 4\*** 'Of all the ethnic groups in the Middle East, the Kurds have had the greatest impact on the politics of the area during the period from 1908 to 2011.' How far do you agree? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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