

TRIBUNE

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Brown Eminence

The election of the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem to lead the Palestine Arab delegation to London has been described as equally embarrassing to the British Government as to responsible Arab statesmen such as Azzam Pasha, Secretary to the Arab League. It is more than that.

Haj Amin el Husseini, ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, has had a varied and adventurous career. Few transformations in his fortunes, however, have been as startling as those of the last twelve months. Just before VE-day, together with Rashid Ali, he gave himself up to French forces on the Austro-German frontier. In his wildest dreams at the time he could not have imagined that a year later he would be conducting Palestine Arab affairs from Cairo and that, under a Labour Government, British military, naval and air forces on an impressive scale would be employed to enforce what was essentially his policy—preventing Jewish immigration into Palestine.

The ex-Mufti fled Palestine in 1937, when about to be arrested for his part in Arab anti-British disturbances, in which a British District Commissioner had been assassinated. It could be argued, and was argued by his friends, that he was merely a patriotic Arab nationalist, fighting against the British only in so far as they were supporting his arch-enemy—Zionism. In 1941 he was associated with Rashid Ali's Nazi-sponsored anti-British revolt in Iraq. With its collapse, he fled to Germany, where broadcasts were put out in his name inciting the Arabs to launch a holy war on Germany's side against the Plutodemocracies, the Jews, and the Communists.

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