

The Old Zionist Smear Machine

The [1943 report](#) of special envoy to the Middle East, General Patrick J. Hurley, to President Franklin D. Roosevelt opposing Zionists ambitions in Palestine, produced a predictable response among certain adherents to that cause in the United States. Here is how Hurley's biographer, Don Lohbeck, described it:

Another faction within the State Department (besides the pro-imperialists and the pro-Communists ed.) that was more concerned with promoting the interests of a foreign group than in protecting the interests of the United States was the pro-Zionist element--and, because of Hurley's refusal to endorse the Zionist program for the imposition of a Jewish state on the inhabitants of Palestine, they joined in attempting to destroy his influence with the President and smear him out of any position of national importance....

The formula was simple. *First*, Hurley's opponents in the State Department "leaked" secret information to selected columnists and commentators; *second*, this information was published in a twisted and perverted form, veiled with mysterious innuendoes that actually said nothing but implied all manner of evil things; *third*, political pressure groups tried to have Hurley removed from all positions of influence on the basis of the false charges and innuendoes.

First: unnamed government officials supplied propagandist [Drew Pearson](#) with confidential information from General Hurley's report to Roosevelt on his interview with [King Ibn Saud](#).

Second: on August 17, the following paragraph appeared in Pearson's newspaper column:

Ibn Saud, now recognized as the most powerful of all Arabs, gave Hurley some strong words against the Jews in Palestine, saying he was determined to drive them from all Arab lands. Hurley reported that he had told Ibn Saud diplomatically that he was in agreement.

Third: two days later, the Zionist Congressman from New York, Emanuel Celler, picked up the smear campaign and "threatened to seek a Congressional investigation of the activities of three State Department employees unless the State Department 'ceases its absurd opposition to Palestine as a haven for the Jews.'" In a letter to Roosevelt, Celler said:

I cannot remain silent in the face of the brazen betrayal of Palestine by the British Foreign Office. I cannot bite my tongue any longer while Jew-haters, many of whom are Roosevelt-baiters, grin like Cheshire cats at the abetting of this betrayal by some of our own officials in the State Department.

Celler named General Patrick J. Hurley, Harold Hoskins (formerly executive assistant to Assistant Secretary of State Adolf A. Berle, Jr.), and Wallace Murray (State Department adviser on political relations) as among those "who have contributed their bit to the betrayal of Palestine." He further charged:

Hurley has been wined and dined by the self-alleged friend of the Allies, King Ibn Saud, and has contracted thereby a severe case of myopia, capable of focusing his vision in the one direction only as indicated by his host.

As the charge of anti-semitism (sic) continued, and others joined in the smear campaign, Hurley felt compelled to discuss the matter with the President. On August 20, he wrote to Roosevelt as follows:

This letter is for the purpose of keeping the record straight.

I rendered a written report to you on my conversations with His Majesty Ibn Saud, King of Saudi Arabia. I amplified that report verbally in a conference with you....

King Ibn Saud never made any such statement to me [as printed by Drew Pearson] and I never made any such reply to the King. I didn't report to you or to anyone else any such conversation.

The balance of Mr. Pearson's column above referred to on the Arab-Jewish policy is also false as far as I am concerned.

From Mr. Pearson's column and from the *Washington Daily News* of August 19th, I notice that certain Congressmen and Senators, especially Congressman Emanuel Celler of New York, have made various false charges against me, all I presume, based on the Pearson falsehood. In addition to all that, they threaten me with a Congressional investigation. Besides that which is appearing in the press, I am receiving letters from Zionist Jews. Every one of these contains an attack or at least language that is intimidating. I am being baited by the Jews.

I am not at all worried or even annoyed by these false accusations. I feel, however, that the purpose of this falsehood is to injure my relations and, more important, the relations of the United States with the King of Saudi Arabia. The latter at this time might, as you know, cause some delays and embarrassment. In justice to King Ibn Saud I think it should be repeated here that the falsehoods published by Mr. Pearson and his backers do unjustly misrepresent the King. King Ibn Saud expressed to me the most kindly solicitude for the welfare of the Jewish communities in the Arab nations. The Arabs always speak of the Jews as their kins-people. The king, however, is opposed to giving a Jewish minority control over an Arab majority in any Arab nation.

In my written report to you I did not detail my conversations with King Ibn Saud on the Palestine problem. I merely said that the King's attitude on that subject had been published in an interview in *Life Magazine* and had been expressed in a letter to you personally. All of this occurred before I conferred with the King.

All this makes more absurd the Jewish attack on me. Notwithstanding this I have not answered any of the letters, nor have I replied to any of the attacks that have been published. As your personal representative I have determined to discuss the subject only with you.

To which letter President Roosevelt replied as follows:

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL
30, 1943

August

Dear Pat:

Thanks for yours of August nineteenth referring to a printed story in Drew Pearson's column. You are quite right in answering none of the letters from Jews or others who believe Drew Pearson's columns.

His ill-considered falsehoods have come to the point where he is doing much harm to his own Government and to other nations. It is a pity that anyone anywhere believes anything that he writes.

So much for Mr. Drew Pearson.

Always sincerely,

(s) FRANKLIN D.

ROOSEVELT

Patrick J. Hurley (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956), pp. 198-201

General Hurley's frank description of perhaps the most influential columnist of the 1940s and 1950s as "propagandist Drew Pearson" was most apt. The following notation appeared at the bottom of an [anti-Zionist article](#) written by

John Mitchell Henshaw in the spring of 1968: "The late John Henshaw was chief legman for columnist Drew Pearson, who later broke with Pearson. At that time, Henshaw's expenses were paid by the Anti-Defamation League, a lobby for Israel, which had a "special relationship" with Pearson. Thus Henshaw's Middle East insights are unique."

Pearson was also responsible for the phony story after James Forrestal's death from a fall from a 16th floor window of the Bethesda Naval Hospital that he had made four "previous" suicide attempts and that, before being "treated" at Bethesda, Forrestal had run from his villa at Hobe Sound, Florida, in the middle of the night exclaiming, "The Russians are coming." (See ["Who Killed James Forrestal?"](#) and ["James Carroll on James Forrestal"](#).) No one worked harder to sell the story that the strongly anti-Zionist and anti-Communist Forrestal killed himself than did the propagandist Pearson.

David Martin, November 8, 2006

[The Bird](#) [The Bird Columns](#) [DCDave's Homepage](#) [DCDave's Column](#)

newsgroup: [alt.thebird](#) *email:* dcdave1@cox.net