American and British approaches to Palestine: a Comparison

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America and Britain have been competing in playing roles in the Middle East particularly in the Palestinian question. The upper hand now is for America, but Britain is still trying to be there and play a major role. Both countries have independent policies that sometimes might interact, and remain active in the different spheres of life in the area. Their envoys continue to pour in to meet with officials of different countries, their money is spent on assorted activities to insure influence, and still make political initiatives that might contribute to problem solving.

Historically, Britain was the forerunner, and could impose its presence on several parts of Arabia and the Middle East. It actually played the major role in shaping the political geography of the area, and was the founder of so many potentially tense issues that have been unfolding into violent conflicts. America has been the heir who was interested in the early fifties in pushing Britain and France from their traditional colonies. The US has been carrying a different approach with different tools and methods.

A comparison between the American and the British styles is interesting and academically very useful. The differences between the American and the British policies are apparent and clear, and studying them will be very useful in understanding different approaches to international politics and domination; and it helps in decision making and policy-shaping. A country like Korea who is interested in establishing relations with countries of the ME certainly benefits from such a study. Academicians and politicians will find such a study illuminating and insightful in political planning.

Scope of the study

This study will be limited to Palestine in space; and will go back to the First World War in time. It will study the British policy in Palestine, its Mandate and relations with the Zionist Organization and the Arabs. Then will move to studying American involvement in the issues. Concentration on the issues from 1967 will be given priority, but the comparison between the two approaches is impossible without delving into the roots of the issues.

Concept definition

This study concentrates only on the American and British official roles in Palestine. It disregards all unofficial roles and those of the non-governmental organizations. It defines these roles on a wide spectrum: political, economic, military, social and cultural.

Palestine is defined as mandatory Palestine; i.e. that piece of land named by the British and the French, and afterwards by the League of Nations as Palestine, and which part of Syria. Israel is that state that expands on an area of around 21000 sq. km of mandatory Palestine.

Methodology

The study will concentrate on the historical analytical approach, and policy analysis. It traces the tenets of the policies of both the Americans and the British through books, articles, documents, declarations and factual practical steps whether political, military, economic or cultural.
There is so much literature on the topic that reflects the different attitudes, policies and points of view. Independent analysis are available too.

Hypothesis

The main hypothesis of this study is that the British are more knowledgeable on Palestine and its people, and consequently they are more intelligent in their approach than the Americans. The British have a better capability in dealing with the Palestinian question than the Americans, and if it was left for them, they can provide more reasonable initiative to bridge the gaps between the conflicting parties.

This hypothesis is based upon the assumption that the British have a good experience in the area, and they gave a better understanding of the customs, traditions, values and ways of thinking for both the Arabs and the Jews. The British use their brains more than they use their muscles.

Literature

Literature on the topic is available in different languages particularly in Arabic. There are many books and so many article that discuss the matter and make thorough analysis. Some of these books aren't available in Palestine or the region, but they could be brought from their sources and the publishing companies.

Parts of the study

The study will be divided into the following parts:

1- Historical background. In this part, British political activity and plans will be trace through the Ottoman period. This is to show the conflicting interests of the colonial powers of the era, and how the British put the basics of their maneuvers.
2- The British Mandate on Palestine. In this part, there will be a discussion of Zionist activities, the cooperation between the British and the Zionist movement, the role of the League of Nations.
3- The British approach toward the Palestinians during the Mandate. The economic social, security, military and economic policies of the

British will be discussed. A main point will be brought out which is the efforts of the British in strengthening the Jews and weakening the Palestinians.

4- The American role in creating Israel. The beginnings of American involvement in Palestine will be traced, and the drastic shift in their policy toward the area after the First World War will be discussed/
5- Seeking a solution. This part will look into the American and the British roles in seeking a solution after the war of 1948.
6- The American monopoly. This will discuss how the Americans started to monopolize solution seeking in Palestine, and how they tried to force the British out of the game.
7- The different proposals and options suggested by the British and the Americans concerning the present situation.

List of references