**Title:** Twenty-One Years Since the Balfour Declaration, 1938

**Year (Hebrew)**: 5698

**Year:** 1938

**Location:** Israel

**Short description**

Cartoon in the newspaper Davar, acknowledging twenty-one years since the Balfour Declaration, November 3, 1938.

**Detailed description**

​​This cartoon was published in the Israeli newspaper *Davar* on November 3, 1938 in recognition of the twenty-one years that had passed since the Balfour Declaration. The cartoon, created by the cartoonist Aryeh Navon, criticises the British Mandate’s immigration policy. ​

The central figure in the cartoon is a poor Jewish refugee dressed in rags, crying to be allowed to enter Palestine, which is fenced in by a gate with the word פלשטינה (א"י) (Palestine, Eretz Yisrael) written on it and surrounded by barbed wire. Behind the gate and peering through menacingly at the would-be immigrant is a British soldier, armed with a rifle. The refugee’s body consists of a rolled-up copy of the Balfour Declaration, thus depicting the Declaration as proof of the Jewish right to move to Palestine; a right which was being denied by the immigration laws of the British Mandate.

The cartoon reflects the Jewish community’s dissatisfaction and frustration with the British government's immigration restrictions. British immigration policy, already impacted by Churchill’s 1922 White Paper, had hardened further during the Arab Revolt (1936-39) in an attempt to appease the Arabs who were demanding an end to Jewish immigration.

Zionist leaders saw these restrictions as a violation of the Balfour Declaration which stated that:

​His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment of a national home for the Jewish people in Israel, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this goal.

According to many people, not only was Britain no longer facilitating this, but had now begun to actively obstruct such a goal.

**Would You Like to Know More?**

**Aryeh Navon** - Aryeh Navon (1909-1996) was Israel’s first cartoonist and received the Israel Prize for the Performing Arts in 1996.

**Teaching Suggestions**

​​​**​**This cartoon could be used in **Jewish** **History** classes as part of a discussion on the Balfour Declaration and the British government’s ongoing commitment to a Jewish state. It could also be used to discuss the situation for Jews in Europe at the time, the rise of Nazism, and the worsening Jewish refugee crisis.

**​Art** or **Media** teachers could introduce Aryeh Navon, the first Israeli cartoonist, and the impact of his work and the general role of cartoons in shaping or reflecting public opinion.

**Discussion Points**

**Observation**

* Who created this cartoon?
* Where and when was the cartoon printed?
* Describe the cartoon.
* How is the Jewish refugee represented?
* Where is the British soldier and what is his attitude?
* What is written on the sign on the wooden gate?
* How does the refugee react to being barred entry?

**Reading Between the Lines**

* What is the cartoon's message?
* Why is the Jewish refugee depicted as the Balfour Declaration?
* Why is it important to know when and where this cartoon was printed?

**Connections**

* What did you feel when you looked at the cartoon?
* Do you think the cartoon is effective?
* Does it achieve its purpose?
* This cartoon criticises the British Mandate's immigration policy in 1938.
* How do you think the British should have acted in light of the tension in Palestine between the Jewish and Arab populations?
* Looking at the cartoon could remind us of the situation depicted in the cartoon and the refugee crisis in Europe today? What is the similarity and what is the difference?

**Creative Ideas**

* This cartoon was drawn at the time to show how the Balfour Declaration had been bypassed by other documents.
* Write a text to accompany the cartoon.
* Next give the refugee and the soldier speech bubbles and fill in their words?

**Target audience:** Primary School, Junior High, High School, Informal Education, Higher Education

**NLI Links**

[Davar, Historical Jewish Press](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/JPress/English/Pages/Davar.aspx)

[The Secret Drafts of the Balfour Declaration](http://web.nli.org.il/sites/NLI/English/library/reading_corner/Pages/balfour.aspx)  
["The British "White" Paper on Palestine," The Sentinel, 25/05/1939, JPress](http://jpress.org.il/Olive/APA/NLI_heb/SharedView.Article.aspx?href=CGS%2F1939%2F05%2F25&id=Ar00500&sk=DAA1AA83)