



# America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative: The King-Crane Commission of 1919 (International Library of Twentieth Century History)

*Andrew Patrick*

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Sent to the Middle East by Woodrow Wilson to ascertain the viability of self-determination in the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, the King-Crane Commission of 1919 was America's first foray into the region. The commission's controversial recommendations included the rejection of the idea of a Jewish state in Syria, US intervention in the Middle East and the end of French colonial aspirations. The Commission's recommendations proved inflammatory, even though its counsel on the question of the Palestinian mandate was eventually disregarded by Lloyd George and Georges Clemenceau in favour of their own national interests. In the ensuing years, the Commission's dismissal of claims by Zionist representatives like David Ben-Gurion on their 'right to Palestine' proved particularly divisive, with some historians labeling it prophetic and accurate, and others arguing that Commission members were biased and ill-informed. Here, in the first book-length analysis of the King-Crane report in nearly 50 years, Andrew Patrick chronicles the history of early US involvement in the region, and challenges extant interpretations of the turbulent relationship between the United States and the Middle East

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