



The Mufti and the Führer



By Mitchell Bard

In 1941, [Haj Amin al-Husseini](#) fled to Germany and met with [Adolf Hitler](#), [Heinrich Himmler](#), [Joachim Von Ribbentrop](#) and other Nazi leaders. He wanted to persuade them to extend the Nazis' anti-Jewish program to the Arab world.

The Mufti sent Hitler 15 drafts of declarations he wanted [Germany](#) and [Italy](#) to make concerning the Middle East. One called on the two countries to declare the illegality of the Jewish home in Palestine. Furthermore, "they accord to Palestine and to other Arab countries the right to solve the problem of the Jewish elements in Palestine and other Arab countries, in accordance with the interest of the Arabs and, by the same method, that the question is now being settled in the Axis countries."¹

In November 1941, the [Mufti met with Hitler](#), who told him the Jews were his foremost enemy. The Nazi dictator rebuffed the Mufti's requests for a declaration in support of the Arabs, however, telling him the time was not right. The Mufti offered Hitler his “thanks for the sympathy which he had always shown for the Arab and especially Palestinian cause, and to which he had given clear expression in his public speeches....The Arabs were Germany's natural friends because they had the same enemies as had Germany, namely....the Jews....” Hitler replied:

Germany stood for uncompromising war against the Jews. That naturally included active opposition to the Jewish national home in Palestine....Germany would furnish positive and practical aid to the Arabs involved in the same struggle....Germany's objective [is]...solely the destruction of the Jewish element residing in the Arab sphere....In that hour the Mufti would be the most authoritative spokesman for the Arab world. The Mufti thanked Hitler profusely.²

In 1945, Yugoslavia sought to indict the Mufti as a war criminal for his role in recruiting 20,000 Muslim volunteers for the [SS](#), who participated in the killing of Jews in Croatia and Hungary. He escaped from French detention in 1946, however, and continued his fight against the Jews from Cairo and later Beirut. He died in 1974.

The Husseini family continued to play a role in Palestinian affairs, with [Faisal Husseini](#), whose father was the Mufti's nephew, regarded until his death in 2001 as one of their leading spokesmen in the territories.

Notes

¹“Grand Mufti Plotted To Do Away With All Jews In Mideast,” *Response*, (Fall 1991), pp. 2-3.

²Record of the Conversation Between the Fuhrer and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem on November 28, 1941, in the Presence of Reich Foreign Minister and Minister Grobba in Berlin, *Documents on German Foreign Policy, 1918-1945*, Series D, Vol. XIII, London, 1964, p. 881ff in Walter Lacquer and Barry Rubin, [The Israel-Arab Reader](#), (NY: Facts on File, 1984), pp. 79-84.