Read the following selection and analyze the map of the Treaty of Lausanne, contrasting it with your other maps. Then answer the questions.

**Dissolution of the Ottoman Empire**

In 1916, the Ottoman Turkish Empire was in control of much of the Arabian Peninsula, including what is now Saudi Arabia and Yemen, as well as what are now Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan. Sherif Hussein of Mecca was the recognized religious leader of the Arabs, being a descendent of Mohammad. Hussein and his sons, Faisal, Ali, Abdullah, and Zeid were actively involved in the planning of an uprising against the Turkish authorities. During the war, the Turks had hoped to recapture territory from the British in North Africa. The British, on the other hand, saw aiding Hussein and the Arabs in an Arab revolt as a way to divide the Turkish forces and protect the British flank in North Africa. Col. Thomas Edward Lawrence, known as Lawrence of Arabia, was the man who brought the two interests together. The Arabs, led by Hussein's sons and with Lawrence's assistance and British promises of independence, revolted against the Turks in the Hejaz and succeeded in taking control of the area north to Damascus. Also, Hussein, with British support, took the title of King of the Arabs and established a kingdom from the Red Sea to the Persian Gulf.

Meanwhile, the Allies were making secret arrangements for the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire. Russia was to annex Constantinople and the Straits of the Dardanelles after the war. Then, in 1916 the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement was signed by the British and French and later ratified by the Russians. It divided the remainder of the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence: the British were to control Mesopotamia and Palestine; the French, Syria and parts of southern Anatolia; the Russians were to get Armenia and Kurdistan. By a separate agreement the Italians were to get several cities on the Aegean coast, including Smyrna.

In 1917, at the same time that they were encouraging Arab nationalism, the British supported Zionism. They signed the Balfour Declaration promising support for the idea of a Jewish "homeland" in Palestine.

In March, 1917, the British forces, after two and a half years of fighting and 98,000 casualties, captured Baghdad. More than a year later, on October 30, 1918, the Mudros Armistice brought the hostilities to a close and confirmed the Ottoman Empire's capitulation to the Allied Powers.

Immediately, the British began supporting Greek over Italian claims to Smyrna and backed the landing of Greek troops in Anatolia in March, 1919. The British wanted to support the Christian populations of western Anatolia and at the same time make it possible for some British occupation troops to withdraw from Anatolia and be replaced by the Greek forces. This decision, however, began the Graeco-Turkish War, four years of bloody fighting between the Greeks and Turks.

President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points was supposed to be an influence on the peace process. Point Twelve states: "The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development . . . ." The Treaty of Sevres, the Allied peace with Turkey, was signed on August 10, 1920. According to its terms, Smyrna was
to be administered by the Greeks for a period of five years; however, the city would technically be under Turkish sovereignty. After the five year period, the city might be joined to Greece by an act of the Smyrna Parliament or by a plebiscite. Greece also received all of Eastern and Western Thrace. Constantinople and the Straits of the Dardanelles were left under the control of the Turks. Yet, an international commission was to administer the waterways of the Straits. In Eastern Anatolia, the Armenians were granted independence and allowed to establish a state of their own. The Kurds were to be permitted to establish the autonomous government of Kurdistan. The Kingdom of Hejaz in Arabia was started under the rule of Sherif Hussein who protected British interests in the area. (He was overthrown by Abdul Aziz al-Saud in 1924.) As had been agreed in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, Syria became a mandate of France, and Mesopotamia and Palestine became mandates of Great Britain. Britain also got certain rights in Egypt, the Sudan, and Cyprus. Italy occupied the island of Rhodes and accepted Greek interests in the Aegean Islands and Western Anatolia, including Smyrna. The Treaty of Sevres stripped the Ottoman Empire of 75 percent of her territory. The remaining Turkish region was 170,000 square miles and eight million people in central Anatolia. Representatives of the Turkish Sultan signed the treaty, and the Allies (neither the United States nor Russia signed) thought that they had concluded a peace with a defeated Turkey that could be enforced easily, primarily with Greek forces of occupation. They did not realize the new spirit of nationalism sweeping Anatolia.

Between 1920 and 1923, the French established a mandate in Syria setting up their own administration much to the consternation of the Arab nationalists who had freed Damascus from the Turks. The French divided Syria into four provinces, one of them Lebanon. The British took over Palestine and divided Mesopotamia into Transjordan and Iraq. Hoping to allay Arab nationalism, they made the sons of Sherif Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Mecca, Abdullah and Faisal, the kings of Transjordan and Iraq, respectively. The oil-rich Kurdish province of Mosul was added to Iraq without any consideration of self-determination for the Kurds. The Iraqi Mandate, in addition to its interests in Iran and Kuwait, enabled Britain to exploit the oil riches of the Gulf. (Kuwait had been separated from the Ottoman lands in 1913 under the protection of the British.)

Meanwhile in Anatolia, the Turkish nationalist Mustapha Kemal rallied the Turks to fight for self-determination and Turkish sovereignty. When British Prime Minister Lloyd-George accepted the Greek offer to use Greek troops to fight the Turkish nationalist forces, most Turks joined Kemal. This Graeco-Turkish war lasted until October, 1922. By that time the Sultan had been overthrown, the Turkish republic created, atrocities had been committed by all sides, Smyrna had been burned, the Anatolian countryside pillaged and burned, and hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians were dead.

A new treaty was renegotiated between the Allies and the newly recognized Turkish Republic. It was signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923. Eastern Thrace was returned to Turkey, including Adrianople. Italy retained Rhodes, and Great Britain kept Cyprus. Turkey was not required to pay war reparations. An international commission was set up to operate the Straits whose shores were demilitarized. Turkey was given the right to close the Straits to an enemy in time of war. Neither the Armenians nor the Kurds were granted self-determination. At an agreement reached between the Greeks and Turks, 1,400,000 Greeks were expelled from Anatolia and returned to Greece. From Macedonian and western Thrace, 400,000 Turks were expelled. Ten days after the Treaty of Lausanne was signed, the Allied forces evacuated Constantinople.
Turkish Empire, 1914

Fig. 1.2. Historical Maps on File (New York: Facts on File, Martin Greenwald Associates, Inc., 1984), Map 4.014.

Fig. 1.3. Howard Sachar, *The Emergence of the Middle East: 1914–1924* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1968), 457–458.

Answer the following questions:

1. What role did the British play in bringing about the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire?

2. Why did the British support the Greeks in Anatolia? What has been the lasting effect of that involvement?

3. Why didn't the Treaty of Sevres last?

4. What were the major concerns of the British and the French in the Middle East after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire? Why?

5. According to the Treaty of Lausanne, what areas did the French control? What areas did the British control? What is significant about these areas?


7. Would you consider the Treaty of Lausanne a good treaty? Why or why not?
Ottoman Empire, 1680

Note the areas that had been lost by 1914.

Fig. 1.1. *Historical Maps on File* (New York: Facts on File, Martin Greenwald Associates, Inc., 1984), Map 3.014.