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**ARAB NATIONALISM
AND THE
PALESTINIANS
1850-1939**

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Preface

The current process of resolving the Middle East question has at its core the grounds for a total restructuring of the Middle East regional order. This important settlement in the Middle East will also stimulate a remodeling of the international order. The old global order has been undergoing a process of decline, and a new one is beginning. The immediate result of this is to place the whole world in a transitional stage in which a single great power dominates the entire order. In other words, the political settlement has come at a time when instability and uncertainty envelop the world reality in general and the Middle East in particular.

This state of confusion represents a serious challenge to Middle Eastern countries in their attempts to recreate their earlier established mutual relationships. The concern of the Palestinian people for their fate is more serious now, because they are in the delicate process of fully establishing a political identity. They are also engaged in building a network of foreign relations worldwide and in the Arab region, considering the fact that they are trying to establish a state their own. For historians, this provides inspiration for the study of Palestinian national interests. It encourages the analysis of existing relations and the evolution of the equation encompassing those relations. Such study aids in understanding the historical development of the processes, which have led to the current circumstances.

The history of Palestine, especially of the Palestinian Arab-Israeli conflict, the Western colonizers, the Zionists and the Arab leadership in neighboring Arab countries, played an instrumental role in shaping the course of the Palestinian struggle. The assessment of the role of all these elements combined, or even of any one of them individually, may constitute the core of a scholarly work.

The Palestinian connection with the Arab *ummah*, the topic selected for this work, has always been characterized by the theme of Palestinians in crisis. Conversely, the struggle with Zionism has always been viewed in terms of its wider Arab contexts. Furthermore, the Palestinian national

movement has always been looked upon as an offshoot of the Arab liberation movement.

This work will center on the foundation and evolution of this relationship. This study will not consider just what is the obvious in history and consequently adapt a superficial approach. It will rather examine in some detail the fact that Palestine and the Palestinians are part of the Arab *ummah* and region. I will consider cultural ties as well as heritage in the formation of this relationship. Furthermore, the socioeconomic factors in the mid-19th Century Arab East were also crucial in shaping this relationship, and I intend in this study to address the issue under focus in terms of the economic transformations and social change of the time. In other words, the study will examine those transformations and changes through their role in the formation of the Arab liberation movement and its offshoot, the Palestinian national resistance. The effects of these early foundations played importantly in the Arab-Israeli conflict leading up to 1939.

It has been my hope that while teaching modern history at Birzeit University, a study of this kind would give me the opportunity to look into primary and secondary material beneficial to my work as a scholar and educator. I feel that my hopes have been realized. However, they could not have come to fruition without the enormous encouragement and support I received from the university administration and from my colleagues. The Birzeit librarians provided unlimited help, for which I extend them my gratitude, and I also thank all the Birzeit students who offered their voluntary assistance. I cannot thank them by names because they are very many, but their help in reading the needed material to me, taking notes, and transcribing and proofreading the manuscript facilitated my work in bringing this study in its final draft to light.

CHAPTER ONE

THE FOUNDATION OF THE ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND DIFFICULTIES OF CONCEPT USE IN THE STUDY OF THE ARAB EAST

The Palestinian struggle for an independent Palestine has generally been treated as an inseparable part of the wider Arab-Israeli conflict. This assessment of the struggle might explain the Arab assumption of leadership in the endeavor to liberate Palestine. One may also attribute to this assessment the Arab call for a comprehensive and just peaceful settlement for the Middle Eastern question, at whose core is the Palestinian dilemma.

The ultimate goal of the Madrid Peace Conference of October 1991, which was attended by Arab delegations and Palestinian representatives that were carefully selected by the PLO, was presumably to reach a comprehensive settlement that could lead to the end of the prevailing state of belligerency. When the Palestinians and Israelis signed the Oslo Accord later on as a result of secret negotiations, the Arab leadership criticized the PLO, claiming it had damaged Arab solidarity, which it considered vital to the efforts to bring about a comprehensive settlement. In this respect, it would not be unfair to accuse the Arab World of being nothing more unified than potatoes within a sack, it being obvious that the existing political fragmentation in the Arab World in general, not the unilateral actions of the Palestinians in particular, is what is harming the sought after solidarity. Given the urgency of the situation, one can hardly blame the Palestinian leadership for adopting an independent role and making decisions independently of its Arab brethren. Yet, one can certainly see why certain parties who are interested in utilizing the Palestinian cause for their own interests would find this annoying.

The Palestinians' decision to 'go it alone' at Oslo should not be judged without initially looking at the Palestinian relationship with the Arab World. Firstly, the Palestinian dilemma has remained unresolved for many, many years, in spite of the fact that the Arab leadership claimed responsibility for leading the struggle with Zionism. Secondly, the Palestinians are moving toward achieving self-rule and establishing a state at a time when the Arab World as a whole is moving toward greater political fragmentation rather than Arab unity. In this regard, studying the relation-

ship of the Palestinian national movement along with the Arab liberation movement of 1882-1939 becomes crucially important. These findings could possibly shed light on the eventual relationship between the Palestinian people and their political entity in communion with their Arab brothers and sisters.

Palestine lies in the heart of the Arab World, linking Egypt and the Arab Maghreb with the Arab East (the Fertile Crescent and the Arabian Peninsula). Palestine's geographical position gave it the advantage of acting as a commercial as well as cultural linking point between the two wings of the Arab nation. In addition, Palestine was witness to waves of Semitic immigration, and these two facts combined have enriched Palestine culturally and strengthened its Arab heritage. Although the geographic factor could explain the foundation of the Palestinian ties with the Arab nation, it does not necessarily illuminate the historical roots of the Palestinian national movement/Arab liberation movement relationship, which is the focus of this work.

In dealing with the above-mentioned relationship, this study will center on the nature of the relationship as well as on its pluses and minuses and their effect on the Palestinian struggle for liberation. The adoption of a disciplinary analysis may facilitate delving into its early historical foundation and its subsequent evolution. This system of analysis will consider various factors. Moreover, the study will examine the existing relationship amongst those factors. The analytical system will then assemble and order the various factors, thereby helping in identifying the factor which played a central role in the emergence of the historical problem that serves as the basis of this work.

In order to comprehend the historical process, one must define its different elements, particularly those that could be viewed as historical contradictions, i.e., problematic aspects in history. In this respect, clarification of the historical problem is viewing, in turn, two sides. The cross-section of the vertical with the horizontal components of the historical process methodologically sounds conducive. It helps in identifying contradictions in history and, more importantly, could be used as a vehicle to follow through historical development.

Studying a society at a given moment reveals existing means and relations of production and various social relations and institutions which their evolution represents; the core of the historical process. Accordingly, studying history could be looked upon as studying a given moment being reproduced in consecutive moments.

Focusing on the evolution of the Arab liberation movement and its offshoot, the Palestinian national movement, reveals the passing over of a given moment in order to gather momentum and arrive at a mature state. The investigation would also aid in tracking the very nature of the historical process; that is, the evolving process of which social change could be seen as a mechanism.

Economic transformation triggers processes of social change and political re-institutionalization and adjustment, in which political and intellectual development is inherent. Since dynamism characterizes history, the study of modern society in the mid-19th Century reveals a state of economic and political transformation as well as social change, which acts as an impetus for further political and intellectual development, leading to social and political restructuring and regrouping. This process carried under its wings a redistribution of interests dictated by the entry of the Middle East into the world capitalist market in accordance with the terms of the global division of labor.

Although the economic factors are important in the formation of social classes, it is necessary to note that other factors, such as political and religious ones might act as a basis for one's social standing. Therefore, one might use Marxist and sometimes Weberian terminology in dealing with the evolving social structure of the Arab region, the analysis of which requires careful consideration of social class and status group factors.

Social change in the Arab World is usually gradual, and the emerging social structure does not necessarily totally negate the old one; rather, the emerging social classes coexist with old ones. In this respect, the conflict of interests does not exist merely among the social classes but also on another level, namely between those old classes and the new emerging system resulting from the process of economic transformation and social change. Needless to say, any study of the 19th-Century Arab World dealing with the nature of Arab history and social dynamism must take into account this state of affairs.

The complexity of the Arab social structure is often very confusing. The great importance of the family – *al-aileh*, *al-hamula* – as a social institution may sometimes lead one to believe that Arab society is merely structured along family lines and could hardly be defined in terms of class division. In this regard, I am inclined to suggest that class and family groupings are entirely related to social institution, which one of the confusing aspects of this social structure. It might also help in understanding how the family name in the Middle East is often an indicator of the family's placement

on the social scale. Al-A'yan families in the 19th-Century Middle East, for example, primarily occupied the higher ranks in the social hierarchy; Al-Kawakibi family in Aleppo or the Tuqan family in Nablus were Al-A'yan families, and anyone familiar with Palestinian society would also associate them with the upper social classes.

The complexity of the Arab social structure exceeds the relationship between family and class. The Ottoman adoption of the Millah system was aimed at regularizing the relationship between the artisans and the central authority in terms of tax collection. Within this sort of regulation, some denominational circles, although religiously based, took on a new class position in existing hierarchies, especially when its members specialized in a given handicraft. By the same token, geographical areas would often determine the inhabitants' involvement in a given economic activity, thus placing them in a certain class position. Worthy of note at this point is that the people who inhabited the Syrian coastal area benefited from trade with Europe, whereas many of those who occupied the Syrian interior, where a system based primarily on an agrarian economy prevailed, were large landholders.

As this study primarily focuses on the Arab East in the 19th and 20th Centuries, it is important to note that the mid-19th Century produced an economic transformation that paved the way for a process of social change, through which a social restructuring and regrouping occurred. Consequently, the A'yan families belonging to the upper social classes lost the privileges they had enjoyed in the past. The process of change also involved the formation of new social classes, the latifundest and comprador bourgeoisie, whose formation was dictated by the entry into the world capitalist market. This social reshaping caused a redistribution of power and social status in the Arab East and represented the primary cause of a class conflict with far-reaching political implications within the society.

Any conflict between established social classes or between old and new ones inevitably results in change. In the case of the Arab nationalist movement, this change was either economically or politically oriented. The conflict could be viewed in terms of its class foundation, though nationalist incongruity constituted its main impetus. Here we speak of a liberation movement whose political ideology was based on Arab nationalism. In brief, this case was characterized by widespread class consciousness and the resulting political expression, both of which manifested in the Arab struggle for independence from the Ottoman Empire. Both could also be traced back to the rooted Arab unrest; unrest that was generated by the

process of social change triggered by the economic transformation in the Middle East in the mid-19th Century.

One should be careful not to ignore the fact that other factors served as grounds for enhancing the newly emerging nationalist trends in the Middle East, and here, one should distinguish between the two very different demands that emerged from class consciousness, namely, the class in itself and the class by itself.¹ In other words, it is important to differentiate between those Arab nationalists who called for Arab independence within an Ottoman Empire and those who insisted upon total independence from the Turks. It should be noted that Palestinian political activists were involved as members of both nationalist groups.

Although the Palestinians were politically active within the wider Arab nationalist movement, they acted as Palestinian nationalists and formed a Palestinian national movement that was designed to provide the organizational tool in the struggle with Zionism. The dual role that the Palestinians played in the liberation efforts does not imply that each role could be treated unilaterally; this dualism is embodied in the existing relationship between the Palestinian and the Arab nationalist movement, the former being an offshoot of the latter. In a sense this relationship affected the development of the Palestinian national movement, which necessitates the examination of the problem in terms of the relationship between the general and the particular in Palestinian society.

Generally speaking, Palestine is part of the wider Arab region and, more importantly, has been deeply involved in the region's history. This generality does not, however, negate the existence of peculiar aspects of Palestinian history. Defining such peculiarities in terms of this generality is nevertheless understandable in light of the continuous interaction between the general and the particular, not to mention the fact that their dialectic relationship has often transformed the peculiar into the general in the history of Palestine's relationship with the Arab region. The Arabs, therefore, view the Palestinian dilemma as their own cause and treat the Palestinian struggle with Zionism as an integral part of their wider struggle to liberate the whole region. This is due to the way in which they perceive the Zionist colonial settlement in Palestine as an offshoot of colonial activities in the entire Arab East region.

¹ Hanna Batatu, *The Old Social Classes and the Revolution Movements of Iraq*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982, p.12.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARAB EAST

In the 19th Century, Greater Syria underwent a process of economic transformation as well as profound social change. The changes that occurred prepared the ground for the intellectual and political development of the late nineteenth and early 20th Century and brought with them a qualitative jump, whereby Greater Syria in terms of socioeconomic, political and intellectual conditions was totally transformed. The magnitude of the scope and nature of that process can be deduced through an evaluation of its substantial impact on the history of the region.

The changes mentioned above cannot be discussed separately from those forces of change which, through their interrelation and interaction, influenced the course of history in the region. The discourse in this respect must consider three major developments that occurred in the first half of the 19th Century, which bear the responsibility for bringing about the process of change.

Firstly, the Egyptian occupation and rule of Greater Syria represented a challenging progressive force for long-lasting traditionalism and backwardness in Syrian society and the institutions under Ottoman rule.

Secondly, the entry of the Middle East into the world capitalist market in the mid-19th Century drastically affected the basis of established socioeconomic, political and intellectual orders.

Thirdly, the fact that the Ottomans regained power in Greater Syria added new dimensions to the evolution of Syrian history since the return of the Ottomans was marred by their vested interest in exerting their central authority and rule all over the Ottoman Empire.

On the eve of Mohammed Ali's occupation, Greater Syria lacked control by the Ottoman authority. The coastal area of Palestine was yet to be taken back from a local leader, Mohammed Bek Abu Nabbut, who attempted to mirror Al-Gazzar's experience in Akka. This is especially poignant, as it came right after he made Jaffa his capital, similar to Abu Nabbut's activities, and the Abu Gosh family exerted its control and influence over the valleys surrounding the Jerusalem Mountain. By the same token, the Al-Amru family assumed power and rule over the southern mountains of Palestine as well as Hebron. The As-Samhan family and their collection of smaller families were influential on the northern side of the Jerusalem mountains, while Nablus and its mountains were under the influential families of Jarrar, Tuqan and Abdul Hadi. Having put aside

their internal disagreements and conflicts, the three Nabulsi families declared their rejection of the Ottoman rule and authority.

At the same time, the Bedouins of Transjordan frequently attacked and otherwise disturbed the peasants settled in the lower Galilee. Abdullah Pasha, who was in Akka, acted as the wali of Northern Palestine, declared disobedience and fought wars with local leaders in Nablus and its surrounding region. Through his active conspiracy policy, he encouraged the people of Damascus to declare their disobedience to their Pasha, whom he later killed.

Lebanon, meanwhile, witnessed the constant struggle of Bashir Ash-Shihabi with the Jumblatis, who were the pashas of Tripoli. The Jumblatis frequently switched their allegiances back and forth between Mustafa Barba and Ali Bek. In the area between Damascus and Aleppo, the Bedouins called Al-Lajujiyun troubled the whole region. The inhabitants of Alexandreta and Baniyas accepted the inherited despotic control of an unknown landowner by the name of Qujik Ali, while the Alawayits refused to pay taxes. Moreover, in most of Syria, corruption spread widely through the administration since the influential A'yan were ready to bribe those officials who were tempted to accept such offers.²

The A'yan families in Syria represented an opposing force for the Ottoman central authority. A strong central authority constituted a threat to the families' influence. It is not surprising therefore to find that the A'yan of Aleppo and Damascus usually stirred up popular opposition to each and every attempt by the Ottoman Pashas to raise taxes or to exert more influence.³ The Egyptian rule of Greater Syria in the period 1833-1839 severely affected the interests of those A'yan families, though the ruler was primarily in conflict with Ottoman interests and authority himself. Ibrahim Pasha's occupation of Syria resulted from the refusal of the Ottomans to fulfill their pledges to Mohammed Ali. The Ottoman sultan had promised to hand him authority over Greater Syria in exchange for his role in ending the Wahhabi state in Najd and crushing the uprising in Greece. The Egyptian control of Syria in fact set the stage for a military conflict with the Ottomans, while stirring fears among the European powers concerning their interests in the Arab East.

² Bazily, *Suriyyah, w-Al-Libnan, w-Al-Filistin Taht Al-Hukm At-Turki* (Syria, Lebanon and Palestine under Turkish Rule). Beirut: Dar Al-Hadath Lit-Tiba'ah w-An-Nashir, 1988, pp. 202 -203.

³ Roger Owen, *Ash-Sharq Al-Awsat fi Al-Iqtisad Al-Alami 1800-1914* (The Middle East and the World Economy 1800-1914). Beirut: Mua'ssasat Al-Abhath Al-Arabiyyah, 1990, p. 110.

Furthermore, the Egyptian occupation was an important experience to the Syrians, since Ibrahim Pasha attempted to mirror his father's experience in Egypt.

The reform measures that Ibrahim Pasha applied in Syria, while being aimed at strengthening his central rule, also formed the basis for establishing state capitalism in Syria, i.e., an economy planned and run by the State. In this respect, Ibrahim Pasha attempted to provide the peasants with greater security so that they would produce more crops, the types of which he himself determined. In addition, he aimed at liberating them from the exploitation of the 'multazims' (tax collectors) through allowing them to submit their complaints concerning the multazims' illegal activities. This caused the multazims to show great hostility toward the Egyptian rule. Ibrahim Pasha encountered antagonism from the bourgeois enforcing these policies, which could be summarized by assuming the role of the above-mentioned class concerning buying the crop and marketing it. His measures also disturbed local Sunni families and waqf officials, especially when he established local governing councils in which people of different allegiances and confessions were treated equally. His liberal attitude was also evident in his decision to allow these councils to legislate.

It is worth noting here that Ibrahim Pasha's liberal policy was aimed at appeasing the European powers, mainly the British, who were annoyed by the Egyptian occupation and expressed fear in regard to their interests in the area. With his actions, he in a sense opened the region to increasing foreign influence politically, religiously and culturally.⁴

The effect of Egyptian rule on Syrian society was dramatic. It was Ibrahim Pasha's intent to subjugate the local A'yan leaders and to put their properties at the mercy of his will. He in fact intended to deprive those local leaders of any influence. He disarmed them and their supporters among the peasants and made the A'yans' interests and level of influence conditional on loyalty to his rule. In Nablus, for example, the A'yan families of Jarrar, Tuqan and Al-Barqawi were tortured and harassed by Ibrahim Pasha when they rejected his authority, while other families, like the Abdul Hadis, were chosen by the Egyptian Pasha to administer Nablus, its mountains and the surrounding area. In short, the downfall of families who had previously possessed influence coincided with the rise of new families who assumed more power.⁵

⁴ Alexander Schölch, *Tahawwulat Jadhriyyah fi Filistin 1856-1882* (Drastic Changes in Palestine between 1856 and 1882). Beirut: Dar Al-Huda, 1990, p. 61.

⁵ Bazily, op. cit., pp. 202-203.

Ibrahim Pasha's decree, which he announced to the people of Nablus upon the Egyptian occupation of Palestine read as follows:

“Since you showed obedience and loyalty, and your country has come under our authority, it is our duty to protect it and to bring to its people comfort and welfare. And due to the fact that our patron Sheikh Mohammed Bin Qasim proved his loyalty and righteousness, we kept him in Nablus, as he was previously a ruler of the city and its surrounding area...”⁶

The Syrian families had generally resented central rule. Each and every A'yan family had its own military organization, which provided them with enough power to face the central government. However, when Ibrahim Pasha realized that he was unable to control them, he resorted to military power, disarming them in the process in order to put an end to violence and to reduce the potential for an open uprising.⁷

The reform package that Ibrahim Pasha adopted in Syria was designed to serve the Egyptian rule, although it could also be viewed as progressive and beneficial to Syria and the Syrians. However, while the measures were useful and very advanced, they resulted in spreading the seeds of resentment among various Syrian social classes. These classes favored weak central authority and the misuse of power over any reform or change, since the former best served the interests of their class and their political influence. Those families who welcomed the advancement of the Egyptian army were the first to rebel in the area surrounding Jerusalem, where they attacked two Egyptian battalions with rocks and stones. When the inhabitants took Ibrahim Pasha himself as a hostage, his father immediately rushed with an army to free him.⁸

In the area of Nablus Mountain, Al-Qasim family leaders were unhappy with Ibrahim Pasha's policy. They met, therefore, with the leaders of other families in the surrounding region and agreed that while performing the pilgrimage to Mecca the coming year, they would make an oath near the holy shrine of Mecca, according to which they would declare disobedience. Upon their return, they began to publicize the idea of mutiny and disobedience, which resulted in the people refusing to pay taxes or serve in the army. In 1834, the leaders held a meeting in Beit Wazan where they all expressed anger and discontent concerning the relationship of the

⁶ Ihsan An-Nimir, *Tarikh Jabal Nablus w-Al-Balq* (Nablus Mountain Road and Balqa). Nablus: Jam'iyyat 'Ummal Al-Matabi' Atta'awuniyin, 1995, p. 322.

⁷ Bazily, op. cit., p.188.

⁸ Ibid., p.127.

Abdul Hadi family with the Egyptian administration. Among the attendants were Sheikh Abdullah Jarrar, Sheikh Issa Al-Barqawi, Sheikh Nasser Al-Mansour, Al-Haj Mohammed, Sheikh Qasim Al-Ahmad and his two sons, Sheikh Mohammed and Sheikh Yousef. The outcome of the meeting was a joint decision to enter an open struggle with the Egyptians in an attempt to free the country from Egyptian rule.⁹

The Egyptian policy clearly planted the seeds of tension within the Syrian society and put the whole society on the verge of an open internal conflict. In fact, a state of conflict was to characterize the history of Syria for the entire two decades that followed the Egyptian withdrawal from the country. This situation coincided with the endeavor of the Ottomans to reestablish their rule in Syria. With this aim in mind, they utilized various measures, which were applied by Ibrahim Pasha in his attempt to establish a strong central authority. Ibrahim Pasha also familiarized Syria with the capitalist exchange. This was his market system measure, which reflected state capitalism, established policy and developed Syrian cash crops, which became an essential tool to meet the emerging demand brought about by the entry into the world capitalist market after 1840. This development came along with a drastic increase in the level of foreign influence, and was strengthened by Egyptian policy.

The reaction of the European powers and in particular the British to the Egyptian occupation of Syria exceeded expectations. This act by Mohammed Ali Pasha alarmed those in power, who moved quickly to preserve their interests in the Middle East.

Firstly, they encouraged the Ottoman Sultan to fight the Egyptian army and called for a conference, which took place in London in 1841. The settlement that resulted from the conference effectively allowed them to impose their will on Mohammed Ali and to force him to accept the treatment of Egypt as a part of the Ottoman Empire. The terms of the Empire's entry in the world capitalist market were fully applicable. Consequently, all Mohammed Ali's hopes of developing Egypt and building a modern state were dashed.

Secondly, the Europeans, mainly the British, started to create a new situation. They were aided in this by Mohammed Ali's attempts to reduce the Europeans' fear of his intentions, including the termination of all forms of Muslim and non-Muslim inequality, which paved the way for European political, religious and cultural influence in Syria. The new lib-

⁹ An-Nimir, op. cit., p. 335.

eral environment facilitated not only the establishment of European churches but also intense European political activity, the most eminent example being the opening of a British consulate in Jerusalem in 1838. Furthermore, the British were quick to conclude the Anglo-Turkish Commercial Convention of 1838¹⁰, which allowed them to pursue commercial interests in the Empire. The convention was crucially important, since it acted as a regularity framework for the Ottoman Empire's entry into the world trading market.

The developments that accompanied the later years of Egyptian rule in Syria were extremely important as they acted as a basis for a new era in Middle Eastern history. The Anglo-Turkish Commercial Convention, for example, formalized the previously informal relationships, allowing European businessmen and companies to enjoy official protection. The religious privileges that the Ottomans had granted the Europeans were thus politicized and used to serve the European powers' intention to increase economic and political influence in the region. Moreover, the Middle East entry into the world trading market triggered socioeconomic political and intellectual changes.

The new stage in the history of the Middle East was marked by increasing world market demand for raw materials, which were needed for European factories, as well as an open market to absorb rising industrial production in the West. The era, therefore, witnessed the transformation of the Middle East economy from a subsistence economy to a cash crop-oriented one. These emerging demands and the economic transformation came at a time when socioeconomic and political institutions in the Middle East were suffering from conservatism and traditionalism. In other words, serious reforms were needed to overcome this obstacle so that the Ottomans could meet market demands.

The Ottomans' reform endeavors entered a new phase by 1839 with the issuing of a decree called *Khatti Sharif Kul Khana*, which confirmed the Ottoman guarantees for man with regard to life, property and dignity. Despite the fact that the decree came at a time when the Ottomans were encountering Mohammed Ali's attacks on their empire, it laid the foundation for an eventual comprehensive reform of both the military and the administration.¹¹

With the completion of the Egyptian withdrawal from Greater Syria, the Ottoman local Pashas unsuccessfully attempted to exert a strong central

¹⁰ Schölch, op. cit., pp.60-61.

¹¹ Owen, op. cit., p.91.

rule in the region. They were unable to impose their policies in accordance with *Khatti Sharif Kul Khana*. Their frustration was compounded when they discovered that they did not have enough military or financial resources or constant support from the capital to cope with the problems of centralization.¹² More importantly, the long-lasting weak control of the Ottomans over the provinces troubled the pashas in their ability to deal with central authority rules and regulations.

Although the Ottoman officials attempted to utilize the Egyptian experience when it came to strengthening central rule, their efforts were thwarted. The measures, which Ibrahim Pasha adopted, pushed the Syrian society toward a serious internal conflict immediately upon the evacuation of the Egyptian army from Syria.

After the Egyptian army had completed its withdrawal, the Druze sheikhs and other leaders began to come back home, having previously suffered from either the Shehapi Prince or being forced to serve under the banner of Ibrahim Pasha. The Jumblati brothers – the sons of Sheikh Bashir – returned with the issuing of the Sultan's *faraman* (decree), which granted them the right to repossess the lands that the Prince had previously confiscated after torturing their father. The Arsalan brothers and the Imadiyims were representatives of the Lebanese large landholders dating back to a social system under Ottoman oppression and torture for over 50 years of the Prince's rule. They all returned home, determined to take back the properties and rights they had previously lost. Their families received them with great joy, celebrating not only the return of their sons, but also more importantly the withdrawal of the Egyptian army. They had resisted the imposition of Egyptian military conscription and heavy taxation. Consequently, the Egyptians had dethroned their leaders.

By 1841, the Maronites were expressing hostility toward the British and Turks and were hopeful that the intervention of the French fleet in the Mediterranean would end the Ottoman rule and bring independence to Lebanon. Various Lebanese families and denominations had, of course, a wide range of ambitions and expectations. The Druze sheikhs, for example, called for the restoration of old privileges pertaining to large landholdings and levels of influence that had been granted by the Ottoman regulations. Meanwhile, Christians in the Southern Sunjuks vehemently opposed a return to these old social regulations and systems, and supporters of the exiled Prince Bashir succeeded in ending his years in exile.

¹² Ibid, p.113.

Meanwhile, the Maronite bishops attempted to establish theocracy exceeding the positivist authority.¹³

After the crisis of 1845 was over, the peasants' struggle to improve their conditions slowed down and did not resume in earnest until the latter part of the 1850s. During this period, a number of developments characterized the history of Lebanon. For example, between the 1840s and the 1860s, the population of Beirut rose from 10 or 12,000 to 40,000, while silk production increased by over 150 percent due to the establishment of five or six silk factories, the first of which was built in Batayir. In addition, the 1850s witnessed the establishment of the first bank in Beirut, which relied on British capital, and by 1858, French companies had completed the project of opening the main road linking Damascus with Beirut.

Lebanon underwent a process of deep integration with the world market, but the flourishing capitalist relationship in the country was accompanied by the rise of the bourgeoisie, the existence of internal antagonism and degenerating conditions for the peasants. The peasant immigration, which had started in the 1850s and reached a head by 1858, mirrored this situation. The economic crisis had a severe impact on the condition of Syria and Lebanon. By 1859, the Ottoman regulations allowed Christians to pay a sum of money in exchange for exemption from the obligatory military draft. But while rich Christians were able to meet the requirements of the law, the poor ones were ready to rebel. By way of a response, the Ottomans sent an army to Damascus where soldiers arrested many poor Christians, especially in Al-Maydan section. In Al-Ladhiqiyyah the peasants remained and rose up against large landowners, and in Nablus, a state of disobedience was declared. In Lebanon, meanwhile, disobedience came in the form of a refusal to pay taxes or to serve in the military and a boycott of the government judicial and administrative institutions.¹⁴

In Lebanon and Syria, the series of internal conflicts, which reached its peak in the Lebanese crisis and the Damascus massacre in 1860, represented an expression of rooted hostility among various factions in the mountains. Each and every group was driven by self-preservation and obtained privileges. For example, the muqata'jiyyah, who were mainly Druze, tried to maintain their status and influence in the face of the Ottomans' intention to strengthen their central authority in Lebanon. In Syria

¹³ Bazily, op. cit., p. 360.

¹⁴ Charles Issawi, *At-Tarikh, Al-Iqtisadi Lil-Hilal Al-Khasib 1800-1914* (The Economic History of the Fertile Crescent). Beirut: Markiz Dirasat Al-Wihda Al-Arabiyyah, 1990, pp. 99-102.

and Palestine, the same intention to re-establish central administration led to tension and increasing unrest among the local A'yan leaders.¹⁵

In the Nablus area, an internal conflict emerged involving Sheikh Mohammed Abdul Hadi, who enjoyed a privileged status under Egyptian rule, and who was later appointed Governor of Nablus by the Ottomans for his disloyalty to Ibrahim Pasha. The most serious development at that time was the return home of the A'yan sheikhs and leaders who had fled the region during the reign of Ibrahim Pasha. The families to which they returned were well armed, having obtained the arms either directly from their allies, by stealing them from the Egyptian army, or by purchasing them in Lebanon. This return of the A'yan sheikhs and leaders renewed the conflict among families from Nablus, who happened to be the strongest and most militant among all the Syrian families.¹⁶

In the two decades that followed the Egyptian withdrawal from Syria, the Ottomans' frequent attempts to strengthen the central administration could not bring about the reorganization of all Ottoman administrative apparatuses and an increase in efficiency. This required the subjugation of all civil and administrative ranks to the Pasha's will. Their attempts were often handicapped, on a temporary basis, by the presence of local leaders in various parts of Syria who always demanded the return of the social and political privileges that had been lost under Egyptian rule. The attitude adopted by those leaders, according to Bazily, could be considered a frustrating obstacle in the path of Ottoman attempts to subjugate the influential A'yan families in various parts of Syria. Their resistance to Ottoman central authority was certainly always active. More importantly, the constant administrative changes and the substitution of the Pasha with another from among his subordinates, in addition to widespread corruption in the Ottoman administration, might have had greater impact on the successes of the Ottomans in the reformation of their administration.¹⁷

The Ottoman officials in Constantinople were convinced that the employment of Khatti Sharif Himyun, an Ottoman reform law enacted in 1856, and the Tanzimat, another Ottoman regulation, could be implemented only through strong central government. The 1860 Syrian crisis made it evident to the Ottomans that direct military and political control in the province was essential, and one of the top Ottoman priorities was to dismantle the influence and authority of the well-located A'yan families.

¹⁵ Owen, *op. cit.*, p. 219.

¹⁶ Bazily, *op. cit.*, p.369.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.339.

In all Syria, including Palestine, their being able to realize these objectives depended heavily on enhancing State authority. By the late 1870s, when the world market penetration into the Arab East had reached maturity, the Ottomans had succeeded in terminating the authority and influence of local families. This task was made all the easier after 1856 due to the support and encouragement of the European governments and their actions concealed in ‘the Ottoman Empire Policy,’ which was directed toward the disruption of all national forces in Syria. Old families were destroyed or downgraded, then peace and quiet prevailed in the country.¹⁸

The British Consul’s description of the status of the Al-Amru family from Hebron – “It was powerful one day and still possesses influence until now” – applied, from the mid-1860s onward, to the status of all the A’yan families living on or near the mountains of Palestine. Most of them succeeded in rescuing their social and political status in the new era, either because they were ready to become a part of the newly established apparatus or because they occupied important positions in the Ottoman administration. The mukhtar position, which the Ottomans created as a competitor to the status associated with the A’yan families, was not to the liking of the latter, which transferred their activities to the main cities in order to enhance their influence. The A’yan families also had to secure positions in the newly established political and administrative organizations, the most important being the administrative councils and the courts, second to which were municipalities and trade courts. The sociopolitical influence in Palestine then moved quickly to the main cities, especially Jerusalem and Nablus, which became highly important administrative centers. The importance of the city stemmed from the fact that Al-Iltizam, the Ottoman system of tax collection in the new era, could only be granted by city councils, and eventually, the rural leaders and sheikhs had to move to the city in order to compete with the urban A’yans.¹⁹

The Ottoman efforts to deprive the A’yan families of their influence expanded to include the settled Jerusalemite families. Al-Khalidi and Al-Husseini were two Jerusalem families – Al-Husseini being the larger and wealthier – that belonged to the A’yan and Al-Ashraf group.²⁰ According

¹⁸ Schölich, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pages 277 & 288.

²⁰ Al-A’yan and Al-Ashraf families both belonged to the upper social classes (‘notables’). They possessed substantial political influence, especially in the period preceding the Ottoman reformation era. Al-A’yan power was either economically or politically based, while Al-Ashraf power was based on religious grounds, namely the claim that the families were descended from the Prophet Mohammed or the fact that they received a religious education and occupied posts in the Islamic establishment. They often resided in the Al-Hijaz area and sometimes in other parts of the Arab East, particularly the main cities.

to the detailed reports of the German Consul, the Mutasarrif (the Ottoman official in charge of governing and administering the Jerusalem Mutasarrifiyyah) frequently asked the Ottoman Government for permission to put an end to the influence of the A'yan families. In 1879, when the new order pertaining to the election of staff for the court and local governing council came into force, the Ottoman Government granted the Mutasarrif the right to appoint new members to the Jerusalem councils, primarily from among those loyal to him. Consequently, the Mutasarrif dismissed all officials belonging to the Al-Khalidi family in addition to influential officials from the Al-Husseini family from their posts, accusing them of disloyalty and negligence and going so far as to ask for their rights vis-à-vis property and land to be reconsidered. In response, the two families agreed to ignore their differences, at least for the time being, and as a result of an initiative on the part of the Al-Husseini family, they met in Jerusalem to find a means by which they could counter attacks on their status and influence.

The two families petitioned the Ottoman Government several times in October 1879, making it clear that they considered the acts of the Mutasarrif illegal and demanding his dethronement. A petition that followed was reported to carry 8,000 signatures. They also complained about the Mutasarrif before the European Consuls, thereby giving the acts of the Mutasarrif a political dimension. According to the French Consul's reports, the Al-Khalidi and Al-Husseini families considered Ra'uf Pasha's action to carry chauvinistic tones against Arabs. The pasha's discriminatory actions were directed against Arabs in general and the two families in particular. He wanted the Prophet Mohammed's grandsons to be dismissed from their posts and replaced by Turks.²¹

The established families in the old social order were the targets of Ottoman agricultural reform measures. In 1839, an Ottoman decree put an end to various forms of large landholdings (the right of individuals to hold large areas of land) in the Empire, and the land once again became state property.²² Then, in 1858, the land code aimed at putting land in the names of the old large landowners and at encouraging private land ownership as a vehicle to raise agricultural production and productivity. The Ottomans, through this code, attempted to put an end to family landholdings, which would be replaced by private ownership aimed at the termi-

²¹ Schölch, op. cit., pp. 281-287.

²² Bayan Al-Hut, *Al-Qiyadat w-Al-Mua'ssasat As-Siyasiyyah fi Filistin 1917-1948* (The Political Leadership and Institutions in Palestine, 1917-1948). Beirut: Markiz Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1981, p. 7.

nation of the influence possessed by family leaders and sheikhs in the old system.

The modernization of the administration, the reformation and the Land Code of 1858, in addition to various aspects of the socioeconomic transformation, affected the whole structure of the Arab region. In the first half of the 18th Century, the upper social classes consisted of families possessing religious power, who either owned land or encouraged caring of Waqf land. In addition, some A'yans who had social and political influence held high-ranking governmental positions or had large landholdings. The Tanzimat (Reformation) had a serious impact. The Ottomans contained the civil authority of the 'ulama (scholars) and the A'yans through integrating them into the newly established administrative apparatus. The A'yans tried to protect their interests and to enlarge their properties through being members of the local governing councils and were ready to collaborate with the Ottomans, though, along with conservative elements, they were unhappy with the newly employed modernization plan. The peasants' fear of taxes and military conscription helped the A'yans in an indirect way to recover some of their declining estates and influence in the Empire: the land, instead of being registered under the names of its proprietors was registered under the names of Al-A'yan and Al-Ashraf, making the proprietors tenants rather than property owners.²³

The Ottomans, who were keen to obtain the support of the A'yans for their objective of strengthening their central rule throughout the Empire, planned to control the A'yans, who were members of the local administration councils. Contrary to Ottoman expectations, this class, through possessing vast areas of land, achieved a form of socioeconomic power independent of the State, which, in the early 20th Century, provided them with an opportunity to remold their position and role within the councils. Instead of becoming obedient collaborators and implementing state policies, they succeeded in exploiting the councils for their own benefit.²⁴ They were also committed to a political ideology that differed from that of the Ottomans. The declining position of the A'yans could also explain their increasing interest in sending their sons to Ottoman schools to acquire an Ottoman education. While being primarily concerned with obtaining compensation for what they had lost through the process of Ottoman reform in the mid-19th Century, they were also hopeful that by being

²³ Amin Said, *Ath-Thawrah Al-Filistiniyyah Al-Kubra 1936-1939* (The Great Palestinian Revolt), translated from Hebrew by Hama Khalifah. Cairo: Matba'at Issa Al-Halabi, 1989, pp. 128, 134-135.

²⁴ Samir Seqali, *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah w-As-Sira' Al-Arabi As-Sahyuni, Part 1*. (The Question of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist Conflict), p. 203.

equipped with an Ottoman education, their sons would be able to secure important posts in the Ottoman hierarchy.²⁵

The Arab region as a whole benefited from the Ottoman schooling system, especially the military schools, although the benefit varied from one area to another. Al-Yaman and Al-Hijaz did not witness the establishment of military schools but continued to rely on traditional Islamic education. In Syria, the activities of the Catholic and Protestant missionaries concentrated on schooling and education, which might explain the introduction of Western culture, including the idea of nationalism, to Syrians in general and the Lebanese in particular. Iraq, meanwhile, derived great benefit from the Ottoman military schools, which could in fact be responsible for the rise of an Iraqi military elite. This elite played a leading role in the history of the Ottoman Empire in the early 20th Century.²⁶

It is important to mention education in Syria. In 1845, an American theologian pointed out that in Kisrawan, one quarter to one third of young male adults were literate, while the proportion of learned women was much less. In Aleppo in 1848, some Christian children were literate, although the vast majority of females could hardly read. By 1839, the level of education in Syria was better than in Egypt, though far more progress could have been achieved were it not for the fact that books were such a rare commodity.²⁷

The limited Ottoman schooling in the Arab region, in addition to the increasing number of schools belonging to the Christian missionaries, provided those A'yans whose influence was declining with an important tool in respect to securing positions for their sons in the Ottoman administration. Of even greater importance was the fact that it aided in the polarization of an Arab elite, comprised mainly of young intellectuals who, having been introduced to Western culture and education, adopted the nationalist idea and carried the banner of Arab nationalism.

The adoption of Arab nationalism as a political ideology by the Arab elite in the second half of the 19th Century and up to World War I was enhanced by the rising nationalistic fever in the Empire. The Ottomans, in their attempt to reform the Empire, sought to restructure the union that bound the diverse ethnic and religious groups in the Empire. The Ottoman subjects

²⁵ Abdilaziz Ad-Duri, *At-Takwin At-Tarikhi Lil-Ummah Al-Arabiyyah* (The Historical Foundation of the Arab Nation). Beirut: Markiz Dirasat Al-Wihdih Al-Arabiyyah, 1984, p. 135.

²⁶ Mohammed Anis, *Ad-Dawliih Al-Uthammiyyah w-Ash-Sharq Al-Arabi (1514-1914)* (The Ottoman State and Arab East, 1514-1914). Cairo: Maktabat Al-Anglu Misriyyah, 1981, p. 218.

²⁷ Issawi, op. cit., p. 76.

had long been unified by Islam, but in 1869, under the Ottoman Citizenship Code, this framework for units was to be replaced by Ottomanization; all ethnic and religious groups were to be united as Ottomans.

With the adoption of the policy of Ottomanization in the last quarter of the 19th Century, a number of developments affected the general political trends in the Empire in general and in the Arab region in particular. While the practice of parliamentary rule through the (Al-Mab'uthan) council in the year 1877-1878 led the people to hope that the situation could be improved, Sultan Abdul Hamid's return to despotism increased the opposition to his rule. He utilized the idea of an Islamic league, which had originally been suggested by the Muslim intellectual, Jamal Ad-Din Al-Afghani, in order to reduce the likelihood of the opposition launching an effective war against his rule. This development also could have led to widespread popular support for the opposition's attempt to break away from this kind of union under an Islamic banner.

The Ottoman war with Russia revealed the weakness of the Ottoman Empire and confirmed the need for comprehensive reform. This external threat resulted in increased solidarity among the Ottoman subjects, who recognized the imminent danger posed by the Russians in particular and the Europeans in general. The people, therefore, became increasingly interested in acting within the Ottoman union as a kind of framework through which they could tackle the persisting problems. In this context, the Arabs acknowledged the importance of reforming the conditions of the Arab community to allow it to join the civilized world and contribute to the progress of civilization, emphasizing the idea of decentralized Ottoman rule in the Arab World or Arab autonomy. It was not until the early 20th Century that a number of developments and challenges pushed them toward the demand for total Arab independence.²⁸

In the early 20th Century, two contradicting tendencies affected Arab thought. The first one was the government's ideological basis of Ottomanization, which stood for the preservation of the Empire and its progress; the second, the Arab nationalist trend, which emphasized the fact that the Arab nation was distinct and its rights and role in the world should be acknowledged. They both agreed, however, on the necessity of development and 'catching up' with Europe, to which they showed a hostile attitude. The Ottomans, prior to and immediately after the constitutional revolution of 1908, confirmed they were unable to face Europe. Furthermore, the Young Turks ruined the existing Arab-Ottoman rela-

²⁸ Ad-Duri, op. cit., p.165.

tionship when they assimilated the policy of ‘Turkification’ and oppressed the Arabs.²⁹

“The fate of these two movements is to constantly struggle with each other until one achieves victory over the other, while the fate of the whole world is bound to the final results of the struggle between the two nations, which represent two conflicting ideologies.”³⁰

The rise of the Young Turks movement could be viewed as a major contributor to the escalating tensions that resulted in the formation of the Arab nationalist counter movement. The Young Turks movement, which was originally formed during the reign of Sultan Abdul Aziz, represented the interests and ambitions of the Turkish middle class and was composed mainly of young Turkish intellectuals who had been educated in Europe and exposed to Western culture. Their aim was to establish constitutional parliamentary rule in the Empire in order to reform and consequently strengthen it in the face of external threats and to placate rebellious nationalist factions. As a result of Sultan Abdul Hamid’s abandonment of the constitution and the parliament, the Young Turks operated secretly within the Empire and publicly outside, aiming at a restoration of constitutional parliamentary life.

The ideas of the Young Turks were harshly criticized by Ramzour, who viewed the movement as lacking content and failing to recognize the serious problems that the Empire endured. The Young Turks, according to him, played on the fact that they considered Sultan Abdul Hamid solely responsible for the ills of the Empire. They did indeed suggest that the Sultan be dethroned and that Midhat Pasha’s constitution be restored as a means to remedy the problems of the Empire. At the same time, they accused various ethnic groups of treason and of harboring an intention to build their own national states.³¹

Upon the success of the constitutional revolution of 1908 and the rise of the Young Turks to power, a state of Arab-Ottoman mutual understanding prevailed, which allowed for the formation of the Society of Arab-Ottoman Brotherhood. However, the failure of the counterrevolution of 1909 and the return of the Young Turks to power ended the Arab-Ottoman understanding. The Young Turks abandoned all

²⁹ Ibid, p.189.

³⁰ Najib Azzuri, *Yaqzat Al-Ummah Al-Arabiyyah* (Arab Nation Awakening). Beirut: Al-Mua’ssasah Al-Arabiyyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 198?, p. 41.

³¹ Mahmoud Saleh Mansi, *Harakat Al-Yaqazah Al-Arabiyyah fi Ash-Sharq Al-Asyawi* (Arab Awakening in the Middle East). Cairo: Dar Al-Ittihad Al-Arabi Lit-Tiba’ah, 1972, pp. 91-93.

societies and closed down Arab newspapers while oppressing and harassing the Arab political activists. In a sense, they forced the Arabs to stand against the Turks. In other words, their actions could be considered one of the leading reasons for the increase in Arab political consciousness, for which the Ottoman oppression and hostile attitude toward Arabs in general provided additional grounds.

Throughout World War I, the Ottoman military court in Jerusalem and ‘Alih continued its work in sentencing a number of Arab leaders to death. Tens of people in Jerusalem, Hebron, Jaffa and different towns and villages were hanged for refusing to serve in the Ottoman army. Deportation to the Anatolia also took place, as did the confiscation of capital and property; measures which affected hundreds of Syrian, Palestinian and Lebanese families.³²

In brief, the policy and measures employed by Ibrahim Pasha and later on by the Ottoman Government upon the restoration of Ottoman rule in the Fertile Crescent laid the foundation for the emergence of rebellious groups and strong opposition to central authority. The attempts to expand and strengthen the rule were in conflict with the interests and ambitions of old social classes in the Arab East. The main concern of the A’yan families was to maintain their influence and power – which required the decline of central authority in the region – in order to place themselves in the upper social hierarchy and enjoy a better social status.

With regard to the Arab East’s entry into the world trading market in the second half of the 19th Century, this entailed a process of economic transformation, including a shift from a subsistence to cash crop-oriented economy. The Ottomans, in their effort to catch up with the rising demands of the world market, adopted a policy of judicial, administrative, and economic reformation, which prepared the ground for a process of social change throughout the Empire in general and the Arab East in particular. On the one hand, the decline in the position and influence of old social classes was completed, while on the other, the new social classes emerged in accordance with the demands and needs of the newly established order.

Although the dispossessed Al-A’yan and Al-Ashraf families became a part of the newly established administrative apparatus in an attempt to rescue their declining status, it could not make up for their loss of influence and power. The expanding strong central authority limited their ability to achieve the same status they had enjoyed in the past. It is most

³² Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 212

likely that their disaffection and discontent served as the main force behind their stand of political oppression to the Ottomans; their declining status undoubtedly raised their class consciousness, of which their political activism was an expression. The adoption of Arab nationalism as a political ideology, which came along with the rising awareness of political rights, revealed the seriousness of the tension and the struggle. This clearly had class grounds and was enhanced by the obtaining of education through Ottoman and missionary schools, in addition to the export of Western culture with its ideas of nationalism and liberty.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY PALESTINE AND COLONIAL SETTLEMENTS

The developments that took place in the mid-19th Century and which molded the history of the Arab East also affected Palestine, and in the late 19th Century, there were many young educated Palestinians among the early Arab nationalists. Palestine as a part of Greater Syria was subject to the Ottoman restoration of power and strong centralization through a policy of reformation, which had an impact on the very existence of the established social structure. Moreover, with its entry into the world market, Palestine produced a large quantity of cash crops, resulting in a rapid increase in exports to Europe. The main demand in respect to cash crops was for cotton, which was planted primarily in the north and middle of Palestine. The seamen also became important and increasingly in demand by the French after 1825. The agents of the European Consuls including traders, businessmen, large landowners, multazims and the representatives of foreign European banks acted as comprador bourgeoisie.³³

The European economic penetration into Palestine coincided with waves of colonial immigration and settlement and constituted the main thrust of the foreign expropriation and domination of Palestine. Palestine then could also be viewed in terms of its peculiar position and the fact that a foreign threat was encountered by a local resistance movement.

The Zionist settlement that took place in the late 19th Century could be traced back historically to the earlier rivalry between two traditionally colonial powers, Britain and France. The call of Napoleon Bonaparte to the Jews, made at the time of his expedition to Egypt and Syria (1798-1799), in which he urged them to assist him in occupying the Temple and enabling Jews to return to the Promised Land³⁴ could be viewed as a cru-

³³ Schölch, op. cit., pp. 96-99.

³⁴ Abdelaziz Mohammed Awad, *Muqaddimih fi Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith* (Introduction to Modern Palestine History). Beirut: Al-Mu'assasah Al-Arabiyyah, 1983, p. 42.

cial turning point in modern Jewish history. Bonaparte intended to achieve a strategic edge over the British through occupying Syria and reaching out to the Arabian Gulf, allowing him to control the international trade with India. Although the Jews' mistrust of Bonaparte prevented them from responding, his call, in a sense, prepared the way for the eventual relationship between European colonialism and Zionism. As a result of this call, the Jews began to see the answer to the worldwide Jewish problem as being the establishment of a Jewish homeland, the most logical choice for this homeland being Palestine. They also looked at European colonialism.

The British, meanwhile, were alarmed by the call, which directed them toward acting to preserve their interests. The adoption of the Jewish cause, as far as the British were concerned, was on the one hand, a reliable tool with which they could counter the French advancement in the region, and on the other, a way to increase the British influence in respect to the Ottoman Empire in general and Palestine in particular granted in the Capitulations.

The British enthusiasm vis-à-vis the Jewish cause began to take a serious course after 1840. The Anglo-Turkish Commercial Convention in 1838 laid the basis for the easy entry of the Arabs into the world capitalist market, while the London Settlement of 1840-1841 established the rule for the evacuation of the Egyptian army from Greater Syria and the world market penetration into Egypt. The privileges that had previously been established within a religious context were transformed and given a political context. These developments solidified the ground for the British move on behalf of the Jewish cause.

In 1840, British cabinet member Palmerstone, under the leadership of Lord Shaftsbury, attempted to convince the Ottoman Sultan to open the door to Palestine to allow the return and settlement of Jews. The rationale behind his stand lay in the fact that both the Ottoman Empire and Palestine would benefit from the wealth that the Jewish capitalists would bring with them, and also in the fact that a Jewish presence in Palestine would block any attempt by Mohammed Ali to threaten the Ottoman Empire once again. The clergy, the politicians and the active British officers in the colonies preferred direct action with regard to the Jewish issue and suggested that the British Government should build a number of colonies for the Jews, the aim being to ensure a the return of Jews to Palestine and the preservation of the British political-strategic and commercial interests in the area.

The British confirmed their interest in exploiting the Jewish issue when they established the Anglican Church in Jerusalem in 1841 and appointed

Alexander, a Jewish convert to Christianity, as the church's first minister, probably because of the Americans' desire to convert the Jews to Protestantism. This could also be viewed as an attempt by the British to strengthen the newly formed and steadily evolving dialectic relationship between European colonization and the embryonic Zionism in Western Europe.

In its attempt to secure the Jewish cause under its wing, the British Government went so far as to enact formal policy pertaining the Jews in Palestine, submitting to Mr. Young, its acting consul in Jerusalem, new regulations and instructions, according to which he was to provide Jews with British protection, whether they were British subjects or subjects of other nations. By 1848, the British Government had instructed its acting consul in the Ottoman Empire in general and Jerusalem in particular to treat Jews as British subjects, especially those who had lost their passports or been denied citizenship in their countries of origin. James Fenn, who was the British Consul in Jerusalem from 1846 to 1862, was particularly enthusiastic in executing his government's instructions concerning the protection of Jews in Palestine.

The British 'concern' for the Jewish cause could be said to characterize the nature of European colonialism, which took the form of economic penetration, colonial settlement and later on, total political and military domination. It also coincided with the Ottoman effort to employ a process of reformation. The measures adopted by the Ottomans were designed to meet the requirements of integration into the world trading market and, at the same time, served as the tools with which the process of colonial settlement in Palestine gathered momentum.

The Land Code of 1858, which aimed at revolutionizing man's relationship with the land through emphasizing private ownership and the redistribution of land among the inhabitants opened the way for the formation of large blocks of land ownership, especially among the wealthier families, officials, and village and tribal sheikhs. In the second decade of the 20th Century, 140 families owned a total of 3,130,000 dunums of land, which suggests that the ownership of each and every wealthy family averaged 22,000 dunums. In reality, many families owned a much larger number of dunums. The Abdul Hadi family in Nablus, for example, owned 60,000 dunums, while the Al-Husseini family's land all over Palestine and the At-Taji family land in Ramallah was estimated at 50,000 dunums. The Ash-Shawwa family land in Gaza was estimated at 100,000 dunums.

The Al-Gusin, Abu Khadrah, Al-Fahum and At-Tabari families were, of course, also among the large landowning families in Palestine.³⁵

The Land Law of 1867 allowed foreigners to own land and buildings in the Ottoman Empire and, along with the Land Code, facilitated the process of colonial immigration and settlement in Palestine. This process, which started in a limited way, was very soon enhanced and expanded by the blocks of Zionist immigrants and colonial settlers in Palestine.

In 1869, the Ottoman Government transferred the ownership of 17 villages in Marj Ibn Amir, including Nazareth, to a number of businessmen from Beirut, among whom were Habib Bistris, Niqula Sarsak, Twini and Farah. It is worth noting that Sarsak, who bought Bistris' land and consequently possessed the 'lion's share' of the land that was transferred to the businessmen, later transferred villages to the Jewish Agency.

The Nazarines, who in 1868 had protested against the unsuccessful settlement of the *Die Templer* near As-Samuniyyah, expressed a great readiness to fight the appropriation of land to and by foreigners. Eventually, in 1870, they were able to repossess part of the land, and the government subsequently compensated the businessmen from Beirut for their losses. It is necessary to note that the large landowners and the mercantile bourgeoisie were the main leaders of this protest movement in Nazareth. However, in 1882, the Ottomans sold five more villages to Sarsak and Salim Al-Khouri, which completed the Sarsak project in Palestine.

The Christian Orthodox Sarsak brothers from Beirut were owners of the largest industrial establishment in Syria. In addition to a bank and a modern wool factory, the brothers owned a large commercial corporation on the Syrian coast, which specialized in exporting grain, silk and cotton. The Sarsak land in Marj Ibn Amir and Nazareth was estimated at 230,000 dunums, with a value of 120,000 Ottoman golden lira.³⁶

Worthy of mention at this point is a Jew named Bergheim, a wealthy financier and merchant and the owner of several factories who enjoyed protection. At one stage, the Bergheim financial institution, which was the main representative of the Ottoman Bank and various London banks, acted as the one and only bank in the region. Moreover, in the 1840s the institution owned land near Jaffa and also in Jerusalem, in addition to a soap factory in Ramle. In 1877, the German Consul estimated the institu-

³⁵ Schölich, op. cit., pp. 65-67.

³⁶ Naji Allush, *Al-Muqawamah Al-Arabiyyah fi Filistin* (Arab Resistance in Palestine). Beirut: PLO, 1967, pp. 15-18.

tion's capital at 400,000 marks, half of which was invested in the Abu Shusheh syndicate, which was located to the south of Ramle and whose size was estimated to be 1,275 hectares. Milfel Bergmann obtained the syndicate by paying 46,000 piasters, which amounted to all the unpaid taxes of 400 persons from the Abu Shusheh village. The Bergheim family established new buildings, installed modern water pumps and machines and employed modern agricultural techniques, and the project was described as profitable and successful. Unlike the Sarsaks, Bergheim was not from the region and consequently, had to defend his new property socially, politically and legally against large landowners and peasants who had certain land claims. This became increasingly so when the Palestinian peasants felt that they had become workers for foreign landlords. The tension reached its peak in 1884 when a group of peasants murdered Peter Bergmann.

These protest movements and tensions, according to Schölch, could be viewed in terms of the indigenous people's struggle with the Europeans, as they were similar to the protests of the people of Yazur southeast of Jaffa. Yazur land was transferred in 1879 to the Miqweh Yisrael Agricultural School, which was built in 1870.³⁷

The establishment of the Jewish agricultural school near Jaffa may suggest firstly an existing relationship between Palestinian Jews and the Jewry in the Diaspora, and secondly, a Jewish intention to work in accordance with European colonization. In other words, it could be considered as part of the process of colonial settlement in Palestine, based on the redemption of land as a means to realize it. The Jews in the Diaspora tended to preserve their religious and cultural ties, and, particularly in Europe, were reluctant to assimilate into their respective societies. Meanwhile, the Europeans were also opposed to the idea of Jewish assimilation. Consequently, the growing relationship between the Jews and the European colonial power enhanced their belief in the need for a worldwide Jewish cause. The accusations concerning the Jews' involvement in the assassination of the Russian Czar in 1881 and their participation in the unsuccessful Bolshevik Revolution of 1905 could be blamed, at least in part, for their worsening conditions and their being treated as a scapegoat. These developments triggered a massive wave of immigration to Palestine, involving Jews from Eastern Europe in particular, which promised a long-lasting negative effect on the Ottoman's collapsing budget. A huge number of the immigrants were elderly and poor.

³⁷ Schölch, *op. cit.*, pp.133-142.

In addition to the financial aspect, there was a political aspect too. It was clear that the immigrants were being used as pawns in the political game being played by Russia and Britain in which each sought to gain influence in the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans, therefore, enacted laws that prevented Jews from becoming permanent residents of Palestine. The Jewish immigrants also posed a threat to certain social classes. While the peasants began to lose their land to the newcomers, shopkeepers and artisans soon discovered that they could not live up to the challenge posed by skilled, educated and well-trained Jewish immigrants, neither in respect to modern business techniques nor in the quality of the work.³⁸

After the failure of the Bolshevik Revolution, there was a considerable increase in Jewish immigration from Russia. Most of the immigrants were young Jews who were enthusiastic and full of hope concerning the establishment of a Jewish homeland. In particular, they were keen to redeem land through cultivation, which in itself was enough to increase the alarm of the Palestinians who felt constantly threatened by the shift in the Jewish immigration pattern.

Needless to say, the formation of the World Zionist Organization (WZO) and its acting agencies after the first World Zionist Congress, held in Switzerland in 1897, greatly enhanced Jewish immigration. More importantly, it constituted the political platform on which rested the necessity of resolving the Jewish cause. It provided the Zionists with the means to support Jewish immigration and Zionist settlement in Palestine both financially and emotionally. Moreover, the WZO now served as an official platform, which allowed, among other things, its leaders and acting agencies to present to the world the Jewish cause and suffering and to secure European assistance in attempting to solve the Jewish problem once and for all. Indeed, its supporters became very active in presenting the Jewish problem in different European circles, attempting to make use of each and every opportunity to manipulate European leaders and governments into aiding the Jewish cause. In doing this, they utilized the Herzl premise, i.e. the Zionists could resolve the Jewish dilemma worldwide and establish a Jewish homeland not through international détente but rather through the utilization of the rivalry among colonial powers.

Herzl did not succeed in convincing the Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II to make a declaration in which he permitted unconditional Jewish immigration to and settlement in Palestine. His successors, however, were able to dismantle the Ottoman prohibition laws that were designed to halt the

³⁸ Abdul Wahab Kayyali, *Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith* (Modern History of Palestine). Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Arabiyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 1985, p. 41.

flow of Jewish immigration. They were also able to guarantee an official presence in the Ottoman capital. After the success of the 1908 Young Turk revolution, Dr. Victor Jacobson of Russian origin, a former chief executive for the Anglo-Palestinian Company in Beirut, was appointed as a representative of the WZO in the Ottoman capital. Jacobson subsequently collaborated and consulted with the five rabbis who were generally recognized as representatives of the Jewish community and known to be sympathetic toward Zionist activities.³⁹

In a bid to strengthen their presence further, the settlers in Palestine established their own security forces, after using the pretext that their lives were in danger, to gain the approval of the Ottoman Pasha of Safad, which the Palestinians regarded as yet another alarming signal. It was the increasing threat that the Zionists posed to the Palestinians, in addition to an escalating fear of the goals of the Zionist settlers and a desire on the part of the Palestinians to preserve their presence in Palestine that led to the rise of the Palestinian Resistance Movement. The Young Turks' collaborationist relationship with Zionism and the Arab nationalists' ambiguous stand on the Zionist issue left the Palestinians alone in the battlefield, which meant they had to primarily depend on themselves and to escalate the resistance. In other words, the latter part of the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century, up until World War I, could be viewed as the era of the rise of the Palestinian Resistance Movement, which constituted the embryo of the subsequently formed Palestinian national movement.

The Palestinian masses formed the flesh of this movement; its vanguard, meanwhile, was composed of young educated Palestinians descended from Al-A'yan families. This particular group benefited greatly from the education offered by the schools of Christian missions. Worthy of note is the fact that the Ottoman contribution to Arab education prior to 1908 was very limited, and the foreign schools run by Christian missionaries and private schools seemed to fill the vacuum that existed as a result of Ottoman negligence. In the post-1908 era, the Ottoman Government began to establish private schools: the number of primary schools was estimated at 95, while there were three secondary schools. The staff of these schools consisted of 234 teachers, who taught 8,248 pupils, including 1,480 female students. During World War I, a high school was established in Jerusalem in order to provide education and training for young Palestinians. Rawhi Al-Khalidi (1861-1913), for example, was able to continue his education in Constantinople and the University of Paris,

³⁹ Ramzour, *Turkiyyah Al-Fatah*. 1960, pp. 40-41.

where he was greatly influenced by Western thought, especially by French intellectuals, at the time of his education and his work as an Ottoman council in Bordeaux (1899-1908). He was known for being very harsh in what he wrote concerning Sultan Abdul Hamid II's oppressive and despotic rule.⁴⁰

It is important to note the fact that the leaders of the Palestinian national movement could be looked upon as Palestinian nationals who were also active members in the Arab nationalist movement, meaning there was an inherent form of dualism in the opposition to Ottoman rule.

One cannot disregard the cultural and educational links between the Palestinians and the Arab World, which probably contributed to the commonly shared hopes, suffering and fears of Palestinians and Arabs alike, as much as they strengthened the nationalist ties. Three of the Palestinian elite obtained their higher education at the university of Al-Azhar or Adda'wah wal-Irshad, which points to the intellectual link that existed between Palestine and the Arab World.⁴¹

The existing relationship between the Palestinian national movement and the Arab liberation movement could be utilized as a platform for assessing the evolution of the new Palestinian movement, which implies that its progress or decline rested heavily on the ebb and flow of the Arab nationalist movement. One should not disregard the role of both the internal and external factors that affected both movements. This setting furnished the ground for political activism. It also, in part, could be traced back to the peculiar situation in Palestine.

The Zionist settlement in Palestine had a great effect on Palestinian national sentiment, which provided a fertile environment for the rise and evolution of the Palestinian national movement. This peculiar situation, though it affected the Palestinians greatly, might have caused the sympathy and support of the Arab *ummah* (nation) for the Palestinians. This development of 'the colonial settlement' essentially threatened Palestine and the Palestinians, since it challenged the Arab roots and history of Palestine, its land and its people. At the same time, it represented a serious threat and an extremely challenging element to the Arab World, its land and the *ummah*.

⁴⁰ Ali Mahafzah, *Al-Fikr As-Siyasi fi Filistin 1918-1948* (Political Thoughts in Palestine 1918-1948). Jordan: Markiz Al-Kutub Al-Urduni, 1989, p. 10.

⁴¹Al-Hut, op. cit., p.168.

The common elements between Palestinian nationals and Arab nationalists that placed the former among the latter were social background and origin. The Palestinian leadership in the late 19th and early 20th Century and the high-ranking Arab nationalists of the same period all descended from A'yan families whose families had historically suffered greatly as a result of the Ottoman implementation of reforms in the mid-19th Century. This development necessitates a serious evaluation of the Palestinian Arab struggle with Zionism up to 1939.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ARAB LIBERATION MOVEMENT: THE FORMATIVE YEARS

The second half of the 19th Century and the early part of the 20th Century, up to World War I, were characterized by an intellectual and political evolution of substantial significance to subsequent developments in the modern Arab East. The old Arab nationalism was modernized, allowing it to meet the emerging needs of the Arab community and its vanguard, the intellectuals belonging to the old social classes. In this respect, one can also suggest that the era under study witnessed the continued formation of Arab political statehood in its embryonic stages. In other words, one could see an Arab awakening and a search for identity.

The development of Arabism passed through different stages, ending with final maturity in the form of a political movement. In all its various stages, it was politically oriented, striving to translate itself into statehood and identity. Arabism, which was one of the major struggling 'isms' in the Middle East, was influenced by existing trends in the Arab movement, especially those favored by the two major factions, one of which was pro-total 'Arab independence,' and the other, pro-Ottoman decentralized rule.

Palestinians as part of the Arab *umma* found themselves in an awkward situation since they were obliged to deal with the threat of Zionist immigration to and settlement in Palestine while being active within the Arab movement. The peculiar position in which they found themselves undoubtedly burdened the Palestinian nationals in certain respects. On the other hand, it helped them in dealing with the struggle with Zionism, as it provided them with the momentum needed for long-lasting resistance to foreign threats and challenges.

INITIAL FORMATION

The Arab and Palestinian nationalist struggle for independence was characterized by self-awareness and class-consciousness, whose embryonic form could be traced back to 1845. James Fenn, the British Consul in Jerusalem, reported to the British Ambassador in Constantinople between 1846 and 1862. He pointed to the fact that the Palestinian Arabs were displaying political consciousness in its early stages. In a letter Fenn

wrote to British Ambassador David Clarendon, dated 3 August 1854, he stated that some of the Arabs did not respect the Ottomans and considered them invaders and robbers of the Caliphate. In another letter, this time written to British Ambassador Malisbury, dated 13 September 1858, Fenn indicated that the Palestinian Arabs were familiar with the word 'independence', which, in this period, they associated with their sought after independence from the Ottoman Empire.¹

The Arab consciousness began to express itself in the Palestinians' active role in the formation of literary societies that focused on the revival of Arab literature, language, and heritage. Although the societies defined themselves as 'literary' in their declared purposes, they were primarily politically oriented. Indeed, their formation could be viewed as a preparatory step in the process of political activism.

Al-Jam'iyyah Al-'Ilmiyyah As-Suriyyah (the Syrian Scientific Society) was formed in 1847. Born as a literary society, its main activities involved the holding of symposia and the giving of speeches by its members, whose lectures concentrated on the Arabic language and heritage. Both Arabs and foreigners participated in the formation of this society, including Nassif Al-Yazigi, Nofal Nofal and Butrus Al-Bustani among the Arabs, and Churchill and Wandeik among the foreigners. After it was reestablished in 1868, its membership included people from outside Beirut, especially those who resided in Constantinople and Damascus. It was then that it became an expression of nationalist consciousness.²

It is important to point out that Nassif Al-Yazigi was a Lebanese Christian intellectual who descended from the old social classes that were influential in the period that preceded the Ottoman reformation. While young, he had the advantage of living in a literary and scientific environment. He was an outspoken advocate of Arab nationalism and worked diligently at compiling an Arabic encyclopedia dealing with the vocabulary of the Arab language and Arabic literature. Al-Yazigi was to become one of the leaders of Arab nationalism after 1866.

Butrus Al-Bustani could also be considered one of the active Arab leaders in the national movement following the Lebanese civil war of 1860. A

¹ Ali Mahafzah, *Al-Fikr As-Siyasi fi Filistin* (Political Thoughts in Palestine). Jordan: Markaz Al-Kutub Al-Urduni, 1989, p.9.

² Abdul Jabbar Hassan Jabburi, *Al-Ahزاب w-Al-Jam'iyyat As-Siyasiyyah fi Al-Qutur As-Suri fi Awakhir Al-Qarn At-Tasi' Ashar Ila Sanat 1958* (Parties and Political Societies in Syria from the Late 19th Century to 1958). Baghdad: Dar Al-Hurriyah Lit-Tiba'ah, 1980, p. 7.

Christian Arab, he was a philologist specializing in Hebrew and Latin, and he displayed great scientific knowledge. As a nationalist, he showed a great interest in national education and the prevalence of civil and religious liberty throughout his life. In his journal, *Al-Jinan*, for example, the indivisibility of faith and love of the motherland serves as the core of its topics.³

The formation of the Syrian Scientific Society could be viewed as a manifestation of the liberal atmosphere and tolerance that marked the Egyptian rule in Greater Syria. One should not forget that it came in the midst of rising tension between the people of the Arab East and the Ottoman Empire, which was actively attempting to reestablish its strong central authority in the Arab East region. Consequently, the formation could be considered an important pillar of the Arab nationalist movement, especially as other Arab nationalists were to follow the footsteps of *Al-Yazigi* and *Al-Bustani* and establish literary societies of their own.

In 1875, the graduates of the American University of Beirut formed the Beirut Secret Society, whose founders included, among others, Fayez Nimr Pasha, Ibrahim Al-Hurani, Ya'qoub Al-Yaziji and Shahin Makaryus. In attempting to promote national consciousness among Arabs, the Society emphasized, in its program, the necessity of obtaining Ottoman recognition of Arabic as an official language, and demanded that Syria be politically independent and united with Lebanon. The freedom of the press was also underlined, as was the call for an Arab boycott of the Ottoman military conscription.

Through the formation of secret societies, Arab activism was to reach a point where it would involve the holding of conventions, something that was recognized as an advanced step in the Arabs' struggle for independence from the Turks. Among the attendees and active participants in the Damascus Congress of 1877 were the loyal A'yan leaders of Beirut, Sayda and Damascus, who acted in consultation with Shiites in 'Amil Hill. Among those were the Shi'ite leader and clergyman Mohammed Al-Amin Ali Siran, Shabib Pasha Al-As'ad Al-Wa'ili, Ahmad Abbas Thari Az-Zahari, Al-Haj Ibrahim Agha Al-Juhari, Al-Haj Hussein Bayham and the Beirut A'yan leader Ahmad As-Sulih. It was decided to declare the independence of Syria, but while recognizing the Ottoman Caliphate, and Prince Abdul Qader Al-Jaza'iri was chosen as the ruler of Greater Syria.

³ Mohammed Abdul Rahman Burj, *Tarikh Al-Watan Al-Arabi fi Al-Qarnayn At-Tasi' 'Ashar w-Al-'Ishrin: Diraseh fi At-Tarikh Al-Arabi Al-Hadith w-Al-Mu'asir* (The History of the Arab World in the 19th and 20th Centuries). Cairo: Maktabat Al-Anglu Misriyyah, 1974, p. 91.

In response, the Ottoman authority rejected their demands and put the leaders of the Congress under house arrest.

This action on the part of the Ottomans did not deter other Arab leaders from moving forward in their bid for Arab independence. In 1881, a number of young Arabs formed the Jam'iyat Hafez Haqouq Al-Millah Al-Arabiyyah (the Society for Preserving the Rights of the Arab Millah), whose leaders emphasized the need for Christian-Muslim cooperation in the struggle to achieve Arab independence from the Turks.⁴

THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL RESISTANCE

The rising Arab political consciousness did not delay the Palestinians' struggle for independence or their efforts to cope with a situation that had greatly deteriorated as a result of Zionist immigration and settlement, which they considered the core of the Arab struggle with the Ottomans. Their peculiar situation required, without any doubt, some form of action capable of putting an end to the drastically worsening conditions of the Palestinian people. Consequently, although of a gradual nature, their actions were steady and effective.

The Palestinians responded to the armed struggle against the Zionist settlers as early as 1886, when a group of peasants, pushed into a corner by the loss of their land, attacked the settlers in Al-Khdirah and Petah Tiqva 'mlabis'. Further decisions to attack other Jewish settlements were born of the same anger and resentment. In addition to deporting peasants from their land and threatening the sources of their livelihood, the Jewish immigration and settlement also represented a threat to Palestinian shopkeepers and artisans, the majority of whom were Christian. Faced with threat of being unable to compete with their Jewish counterparts, the shopkeepers and artisans expressed their reservations concerning the Jewish settlers to Najib Al-Haj, the editor-in-chief Abu Al-Hul, a journal in Cairo, during his visit to Palestine in 1895. In response, Al-Haj, in his writing, accused the Zionists of depriving the Palestinian Arabs of their means of living. The fears of Palestinian Christians also had an impact on the members of the editorial board of the journal *Al-Muqtasaf*, who expressed their anxiety concerning the economic impact of the Jewish immigration on the Palestinian people.

When the Jewish Agency bought land from the Sursuk family near Tiberias, enraged local villagers attacked the engineers and assistants that the

⁴ Jabburi, op. cit. pp. 9-13.

Agency sent to survey the land and determine its size. Preventing them from preparing the information and papers, the transfer would remain unofficial. The Palestinians also succeeded in stopping several other deals involving the Agency in the early 20th Century.

It is worth noting that the resistance against the Zionist immigration and land expropriation for the purpose of agricultural settlement in Palestine increased dramatically following the convening of the First Zionist Congress in Basle in 1897. The fears of the Palestinian people in regard to their motherland and future were rising. The Palestinians saw the Jewish immigration to and settlement in Palestine as posing a major threat to their political and economic existence, as well as to the Arab character of Palestine. Against this background, the Mufti of Jerusalem headed a local, government-authorized committee that was responsible for checking the property transferal files in the Mutasarrifiah of Jerusalem, and it consequently halted the transfer of land to Jewish hands for several years. The year 1900 witnessed the submission of a large number of petitions, in which the people expressed their strong opposition to the Zionist expropriation of land. They demanded an end to this expropriation.⁵

Political demonstration of Palestinian opposition to Zionism occurred several years before the First Zionist Congress of 1897. In 1891, for example, a representative body of the A'yan and local leaders of Jerusalem was formed, which in itself points to the high level of political awareness and activism that existed at the time. The leaders tried through this political body to express their fear and reservations concerning the Zionist immigration and settlement. Moreover, they asked the Ottoman central authority to enact laws prohibiting Jewish immigration to Palestine and emphasized the need to effectively halt the transfer of Palestinian land to Jewish hands. Although such requests might have helped psychologically in reducing the Palestinian anxiety, they were not expected to bring about serious results.

Amin Arsalan Qa'im Qam, the ruler of Tiberias, was enthusiastic in his opposition to the transfer of land to the Zionists, not so much because of his assessment of the Zionist threat to the Palestinian peasants, but rather because he was concerned that the transfer of Arab land to Jews could potentially change the identity of the country. His motivation implies, therefore, that Arabs at that time fully understood the nature and purposes of Zionism and its potential impact on the country, should it be allowed to

⁵ Abdul Wahhab Kayyali, *Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith* (Modern History of Palestine). Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Arabiyyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 1985, pp. 41-43.

realize its established ends. Arsalan understood that Palestine's fate was not in Arab hands but in those of the Ottoman authority. In this respect, he saw the authority as being influenced and controlled by Zionism, resulting in its implicit approval of the Zionist immigration and settlement.⁶

Regardless of the evaluation of the Ottoman Empire's relationship with Zionism, the Palestinians and Arabs in general in their resistance to Zionism relied heavily on the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans were at that time the rulers of the Arab land, having assumed complete control over the organizational and administrative aspects of the region. Consequently, they were looked upon as the judicial and administrative body that could presumably control the flocks of Jewish immigrants to Palestine and to stem the Zionist expropriation of land. The Palestinians might also have believed that the Ottomans had a vested interest in preventing Zionism from achieving its goals in Palestine. Zionism, through creating an additional nationalist problem in the area for the Ottomans, could have been perceived as threatening not only Palestine but the entire Ottoman Empire.

The Palestinians of the late 19th Century regarded themselves as Ottoman subjects whose only source of support in their resistance to Zionism was the Empire, which was considered the representative of the Islamic Caliphate. The Palestinians could not at that time rely on the Arab movement, of which they were an important part, since it was not yet strong nor fully mature. It was still in its early stages organizationally, and even the idea of total Arab independence was not yet completely formulated.

More importantly, the Palestinian resistance suffered from a lack of cohesion and concerted effort. The relationship between the leadership and the masses was molded by the elitist approach of the leadership. This approach created and deepened the gap between the leaders and their masses, and it would come to have serious ramifications for the Palestinian national movement. In addition, although the leaders, who descended from A'yan families, showed great interest in political activism and the need to preserve their political status and position, they totally neglected the economic factors at hand. They failed to see the importance of investing time and money in forming companies that would deal with the issue of land and the development of agriculture.

⁶ Samir Seqali, "Al-Awda Al-Ijtimayyah wa Al-Iqtisadyah fi Filistin Athna' Al Harb Al-Alamiyyah Al-Ula" ("The Social and Economic Situation in Palestine During World War I"); *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah w-As-Sira' Al-Arabi As-Sahyuni* (The Question of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist Conflict) Part 1. pp. 327-329.

The above-mentioned leaders were subsequently preoccupied with the issue of Arab nationalism and Arab independence from the Turks; in other words, with redefining the relationship between the two. Not surprisingly, their activism within the sphere of Arabism came at the expense of Palestinian resistance to Zionism.

THE CRUCIAL FORMATIVE YEARS

The late 19th Century constituted a crucially important new era in the history of Arab nationalism, an era that witnessed the transformation of Arab activism from politicized literary and linguistic works to a more politically orientated form. In this respect, it is important to emphasize two major developments that could help in understanding the newly emerging stage of Arab activism. The application of Midhat Pasha's Constitution of 1876 and Sultan Abdul Hamid II's despotic rule – which are often blamed for hindering the Arabs' effort to achieve nationalist goals – diminished the liberal atmosphere that had provided the Arab leaders with a platform of openness and free thinking. The constitutional and parliamentary life of the Ottoman Empire could have created the channels through which Arab leaders might have obtained some gains for the Arab people and region. It could have directed Arab activism toward the means to redefining the Arab-Ottoman relationship. The adoption by Sultan Abdul Hamid II of the idea of the Islamic league must have been looked upon as an additional obstacle in the nationalist struggle with the Turks, as it entailed the creation of a new unifying framework for the different ethnic religious groups in the Empire. This, of course, contradicted the Arabs' adoption of the nationalist ideology. It was frequently regarded as hindering Arab nationalism as a political ideology from gaining legitimacy amongst the masses, the majority of whom adhered to Islam.

The late 19th Century witnessed the formation of the Charity Society of Damascus. Although its declared goals were charitable, it was, in fact, a secret society that was originally formed by Tahir Al-Jazairi. Its main political objectives were the reinstatement of the frozen Ottoman Constitution and the reactivating of the *shura* (consultation) rule in the Arab region. The founders of this society had contacts with the leaders of the movement of Young Turks who later led the constitutional coup of 1908.

The members of the Society were from a wide range of professions. Among its ranks were 'ulama, reformers and famous writers; intellectuals like Sheikh Jamal Ad-Din Al-Qasimi, Sheikh Abdul Razeq Al-Bitar, and Sheikh Salim Al-Bukhari. Later, Rafiq Al-Azm, Mohammed Kurd Ali,

Fayez Al-Khoury, Abdul Hamid Az-Zahrawi, Shukri Al-Asali and other intellectuals joined the Society.

Salim Al-Jazairi and Sa'ad Darwish, senior Arab officers in the Ottoman army were active members of the Society, as was Hussein Awni Bek, an intellectual and an officer in the Department of Education.⁷

The program of the Society highlighted an intellectual reform-oriented trend within the Arab nationalist movement, which surfaced in the early stages of the politically oriented movement. It placed, for example, great emphasis on the need to restore the Constitution and to reinstall the parliament in Ottoman political life as a means of coping with the ills of the Empire. In other words, the members of the Society seemed to perceive themselves as integral to the Empire. They did not necessarily demand the fragmentation of the Empire along nationalist lines but rather the preservation of the Empire along with inevitable reform. This early tendency could be viewed as the basis for the eventual development of the idea of decentralized Ottoman rule in the Arab region, where an Arab political entity was to be created and whose relationship with the Ottoman Empire would be based on the issue of the Ottoman decentralized authority, similar to the model of the Hungarian-Austrian confederate monarchy.

This trend, which was very strong at the time of the 1908 constitutional coup and thereafter, acted prior to the coup as an impetus to the concerted efforts of some Arab intellectuals and Young Turks to bring about serious changes in the political life of the Empire. Although these two groups differed in their ideology, despotism and a lack of freedom, in addition to opposition to the rule of Abdul Hamid II, united them in their bid to facilitate change.

In 1906, Jam'iyah Watan, the 'Motherland Society', was formed in Damascus. With branches in Jaffa and Jerusalem, its members came mainly from the officers of the fifth brigade. Among the early founders of the society was Mustafa Kamal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of modern Turkey. Other members included Suleiman Bek and Haj Mustafa.⁸

The early 20th Century, prior to the 1908 constitutional coup in Turkey, provided the intellectual setting for the emergence of another intellectual trend within the Arab nationalist movement, which was characterized by a well-defined stand on the issue of the Arab-Turkish relationship and the inevitability of Arab independence from the Ottoman Empire. This can be

⁷ Jabburi, *op. cit.* p. 14.

⁸ *Ibid.*

attributed to Abdul Rahim Al-Kawakibi, a prominent leading figure in the Arab liberation movement.

Al-Kawakibi descended from the Al-Ashraf family in Aleppo and worked as an editor, first of *Al-Furat* and then of *Ash-Shabba*' newspapers. He also held certain official posts and later worked as a lawyer. It is worth noting that Al-Kawakibi wrote two major works in his lifetime, *Taba'a Al-Istibdad* and *Um Al-Kura*. He created an intellectual awakening in the Arab region, emphasizing in his writings the necessity of standing against Turkish despotism. His main theme centered on the importance of the Arabs regaining the Caliphate from the Turks.

Between 1902-1903, Al-Kawakibi, in his writing in *Al-Manar*, pointed out the means to remedy the ills in the Arab World. Although he called for Muslim unity from Morocco to China through an Islamic league, his main concern was the Arab region and the progress of the idea of Arab nationalism. He emphasized the distinct Arab role in the history of the region, through which he attempted to show how the Arab people had been treated badly and how, based on the Arabs' history, they should be considered a candidate for facilitating the progress of Islam. In short, Al-Kawakibi, although a true Arab nationalist, acknowledged the Islamic union and league. In this respect, it is important to indicate that Al-Kawakibi distinguished between Muslim and Arab. Consequently, he called for the administrative demarcation between the Turks and the Arabs through the adoption of a decentralized rule as a step towards the eventual Arab independence from the Turks.

The installation of an Arab Caliphate in Mecca was a major theme in Al-Kawakibi's thinking. He favored an administrative demarcation among all ethnic minorities within the Empire, which would allow them to enjoy some autonomy on the basis of nationalism through a decentralized Ottoman rule. He was known for having a friendly relationship with people from different ethnic and denominational backgrounds, his nationalism always superseding denominational differences.⁹

Najib Azuri, an Arab nationalist, treated the early 20th Century in terms of two struggling trends affecting the Arab question, i.e., the tension between the Ottoman ideology of preserving the Empire and Arab nationalism in its battle to gain a political identity and entity. As far as Azuri was concerned, both trends put high priority on the need to modernize the region in keeping with the trend in Europe, but while recognizing the dangers posed by that part of the world. Azuri's acknowledgment of the

⁹ Burj, op. cit., pp. 101-109.

Arab liberation movement with respect to its relations with Europe and European dangers did not deter him from valuing the French intellectual and cultural impact on the region. In fact, he supported the French occupation of Algeria and called upon the French to increase their influence and role in Syria and Palestine.¹⁰

One might say from Al-Kawakibi and Azuri's thoughts that the Arab nationalist movement in the early 20th Century was suffering from a state of confusion, ambiguity and intellectual non-cohesiveness. The two men could easily have defined Arab nationalism, but they were still under the influence of competing Islam under Ottoman rule with Arabism.

The definition of Arab nationalism given by Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, an Arab nationalist, best demonstrates the Arab nationalist's self-perception and consciousness. Darwazih stated that the idea of nationalism aimed at the establishment of a united Arab entity in which the units descended from the same origin or inhabited the same country, spoke a single language, and shared the same interests and ends. In his view, the Arab World that existed then was the motherland of the Arab race. It had also been the land of the Arab Semitic immigration waves that had come from the Arabian Peninsula to various Arab regions. Arab blood is still present in the Arab Peninsula, whose inhabitants always had contact with the people of the different Arab regions in Greater Syria, Iraq, the Nile Valley and North Africa. It had been and still was the supplier to the Arab World of waves of immigration.¹¹

The study of the idea of Arab nationalism and its formulation in the early 20th Century is highly significant, especially when one acknowledges the importance of its intellectual formulation in relation to the organizational formation of the Arab movement. The formulation of Arab nationalism was affected by two major factors. First, the Arab movement with respect to the issue of nationalism and the Arab nation came as a response to a threat and a challenge, posed by the Ottoman's attempt to 'Turkify' all the subjects of their empire, which targeted the very existence of the Arabs as a nation and an entity. Second, the Arab leaders dealt with the issue of Arab nationalism from its political angles. However, this approach lacked a comprehensive program or the means to accomplish the objectives assigned to the Arab liberation movement. These factors

¹⁰ Mohammed Salih Mansi, *Harakat Al-Yaqzah Al-Arabiyyah fi Ash-Sharq Al-Asyawi* (Arab Awakening in the Middle East). Cairo: Dar Al-Ittihad Al-Arabi Lit-Tiba'ah, 1972, p. 76.

¹¹ Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, *Nasha'at Al-Harakih Al-Arabiyyah Al-Hadithih* (The Beginning of the Modern Arab Movement). Beirut: Al-Maktabah Al-Asriyyah, 1971, pp. 9-20.

may explain why Arab nationalism could be described as being foggy, ambiguous and non-cohesive.

The idea of Arab nationalism and Arab independence from the Turks could be seen as revolutionary. The factors and the conditions as discussed above reduce it to an extremely reformist level. They also made it difficult for the nationalist leaders to define the best way to go about materializing their goals.

In light of this argument, one can easily understand the Arabs' response to the constitutional coup of 1908 in the Ottoman Empire. Their interest in change, which they perceived as a vehicle for carrying the idea of nationalism to fruition, framed their response to this coup. Although Arab nationalists stood against the policy of 'Turkification' and Ottoman despotism, they supported the constitutionalists of 1908, despite the fact that the Arab attitude was divided on this issue.

The confusion and the lack of adequate assessment on the Arab side in 1908 had a serious impact on the Arab nationalist movement. Arab nationalists supported an Ottoman constitutional movement, which later acted vigorously against Arabs and Palestinians. Considering the fact that the constitutionalists were Turkish nationalists, their main concern was to impose the Turkish will and nationality upon others while resolving the financial and economic problems of the Ottoman Empire. The Arab-friendly and supportive relationship with the constitutionalists was short-lived.

First and foremost, Al-Ittihad Wat-Taraqqi (The Society of Union and Progress) included in its ranks both Turks and Arabs. It started with declared literary intentions, but at the same time acted as an underground political organization working against the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid II. Its membership was composed of Arabs and Turks who descended from upper social classes, among whom were Kamal Bek Diya Pasha, Mustafa Fadil Pasha, Shafiq Isma'il, the Egyptian Khadiv, and Fawzi Bek. Among its members were experts on literature, intellectuals, politicians and military officers, such as Khalil Ghneim, a Christian from Beirut and a representative of Syria in Majlis Al-Mab'uthan (the Ottoman Parliament).

The Arab support of the constitutional coup of 1908 and the desire to improve the Arabs' conditions stimulated Arab enthusiasm for a joint effort with the Turks to reform the socioeconomic, political, administrative and judicial situation. After the constitutional movement had succeeded in dethroning Sultan Abdul Hamid II, the Syrian Turkish Reformation Committee (Lajnit Islah At-Turkiyyah Suriyyah) was formed. Founded

by Amin Arsalan, its main target was to improve conditions in the Ottoman Empire in general and in the Arab region in particular. Furthermore, in 1908 Jam'iyyat Al-Ikha Al-Arabi Al-Uthmani (Society of Arab Ottoman Brotherhood) was established. The founders of this society were Arab intellectuals from various Arab *wilayats* and in particular the Syrian Arabs, the most prominent being Sadiq Pasha, Shafiq Al-Mu'ayyad and Shukri Bek Al-Husseini. The main task of the society was to facilitate Arab cooperation with the Turks in order to achieve internal reform.

The completion of the picture can only be achieved by showing the other side of the coin. Although a great number of Arabs supported the constitutional movement of 1908, others stood firmly against the Society of Union and Progress, with whose ideology they disagreed. They might have favored the policy of Sultan Abdul Hamid II over the unionist stand, although it could be viewed as regressive. The society of Al-Jam'iyyah Al-Islamiyyah (The Islamic League in Constantinople) is a case in point. With the aim of countering the unionists and their activities, its prominent Arab leaders included Shekib Arslan, Ash-Sheikh Abdul Aziz Jawish, Abdul Rahman Al-Yousef, and Mohammed Al-Azm. In addition to this, a local society, Jam'iyyat Al-Iha Al-Arabi (Society of Arab Brotherhood) was formed in Aleppo in 1908 and subsequently adopted a vehement opposition stand to the Unionists and their ideology.¹² The constitutional movement of 1908 shortly after its success faced the threat of the counter revolutionaries, especially among the supporters of the dethroned sultan who, in 1909, launched an unsuccessful counter coup in an attempt to bring Sultan Abdul Hamid II back to the throne.

Although this attempt was short-lived, it attracted the attention of various groups in the Empire, some of whom supported the counter coup and some of whom opposed it. It is worth noting that the conservative sheikhs and local leaders in the Empire received with pleasure the movement carried out by the counterrevolutionaries in the Capital in March 1909. The following example from Nablus best illuminates the picture: At the time of the Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the successful coup, the conservative regressive figures in Nablus became very active, holding meetings in different circles every night and calling on the people to commit themselves to being obedient to the Caliphate and to support the *shari'a* (Islamic jurisdiction). They were also urged to curse infidelity and infidels. It seems that the cabinet that the Unionists imposed after their successful coup against Sultan Abdul Hamid II revealed to the people the state of affairs in the capital. At the same time, the countercoup called upon the people to

¹² Jabburi, op. cit.

support the Sultan's bid for a return to the Caliphate. It is significant, therefore, to note that this movement in Nablus was not alone in its rise and impact.

The movement in Nablus was led by Tawfiq Hammad, who was known for his descent from the upper middle class. He was a pious man, modest in his education and intelligence, and showed a good mastery of Turkish. In the early stages of his career, Hammad worked as a clerk in the Muta-sarrifayah and soon became the popular leader of the clerks group. Together with his colleagues in Nablus he formed jam'iyyah (a society). Among those leaders were Al-Sheikh Umar Zitir, Al-Haj Badawi 'Shur, Al-Haj Abdul Hadi Al-Qasim, Abdul Hadi and Hafez Pasha Al-Mohammed, Abdul Hadi and Abdul Rahman Al-Haj Ibrahim, mayor of Tulkarem. Prior to the constitution, they were part of the struggle within the Al-A'yan circle in the Nablus metropolitan area. This group of men stood mainly against the Al-Qasem family in Jamma' since this family was the most dominant and influential among its peers. The group constantly wrote to the Ottoman Government complaining about the acts of the Al-Qasem family until they succeeded in making the Ottomans restructure the administrative establishment, which led, eventually, to a decline in the influence of the Al-Qasem family.

This group, significantly, sent a telegraph of support and congratulations to the constitutionalists upon the success of their movement in 1908, signing it "Jam'iyyah" (Society). Al-Haj Tawfiq Hammad had the kind of charisma that made people respect him, even if they did not particularly like him. He was known for being loyal, strong, and stubborn, and when he became the Mayor of Nablus, he made a considerable contribution to the organizational efficiency of the municipality. He also became a member of the administrative council of Nablus, and his status greatly enhanced the position of the Jam'iyyah.

The support of Mr. Hammad and his colleagues for the March 1909 counterrevolution provoked the leaders of the Society of Union and Progress, who regained control following the dethronement of the Sultan. Consequently, the unionist government acted against the administration of Beirut and Nablus and oppressed these administrations. Moreover, the Unionists accused the supporters of the counterrevolutionaries of being corrupt and acting in defiance of the law and security needs. Some of those leaders were deported to Beirut and tried there.

The Ottoman authorities in Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarem continued to harass the leaders, working against their interests. In fact, the Ottoman authority tried to undermine the A'yan leaders through supporting local

A'yan families, who would join the Ottoman authority in harassing the disloyal leaders and their families. In the second parliamentary election, the Ottoman authority decided to harass the family of Al-Haj Tawfiq Hammad by promoting Haidar Bek Tuqan's candidacy for the parliament seat. Hammad's opportunity to rid himself of such an awkward situation came with the fall of the unionist government and the formation of the cabinet by the Opposition Party. In so doing, Hammad succeeded in becoming the representative of Nablus, where he stayed until the end of the parliamentary term, which had a great impact on promoting Hammad's role as a political figure and one who would become prominent during the British Mandate. During the British period, Hammad headed the Islamic Christian Society in Nablus where he displayed great hostility towards both the British and the Zionists.¹³

The failure of the March 1909 countercoup brought the Unionists back to power, thereby ending the Arab-Turkish honeymoon. The unionist government outlawed all active Arab societies, including the Society of Arab Ottoman Brotherhood, and prohibited the issuing of several Arab journals and newspapers. In a sense, they attempted to silence all voices calling for independence and liberty and to enthusiastically 'Turkify' all the subjects of the Empire. These measures, not surprisingly, stirred hostility towards the Turks again and elevated the nationalist fervor for achieving independence and freedom.

In 1909, the Unionists' return to power could be considered a crucial turning point in the history of Arab nationalism and Palestinian resistance to Zionist immigration to and settlement in Palestine. The limitations put on political and intellectual liberty and the policy of Turkification must have had a great impact on the active Arab nationalists. The Ottoman need for the Zionists' financial support in balancing the budget inspired negotiation with the Zionist leaders, which led to a loosening of Ottoman regulations prohibiting the influx of Jews to Palestine. Eventually, all such regulations were canceled.

This must have represented a huge setback for the Palestine Question and the resistance to Zionist immigration. Both the Arab nationalist movement and the Palestinian resistance to Zionists between 1909 and 1914 gathered more momentum in an attempt to enhance their bid to accomplish their goals.

¹³ Darwazih, op. cit., pp. 180-181.

The period under focus indeed carried with it the transformation of the Arab nationalist cause into a well-defined political movement, which this time adopted an underground form of activism, due to the seriousness and sensitivity of the period. They had figured out that secrecy under an authoritarian regime and constant surveillance of policy best preserve organizational goals and serve to enhance political activism.

This period witnessed the formation of secret societies through which the Arab and Palestinian activists decided to channel their activism. Although the Unionists' measures should have unified Arab activists, the movement suffered from deeper fragmentation with regard to the level of patriotism, nationalism, and ideology.

For example, in the Lebanese capital of Beirut, a commercial and intellectual center, the political movement was composed of two conflicting political ideologies, both of which, however, were united in the call for a Lebanese political entity. The first group could be seen as regionalist and was composed of Christians from the mountains of Lebanon, who emphasized the need for the establishment of an independent political entity under French protection. The other trend was Arab nationalist and was comprised mainly of Arab nationalists who obtained their education from both *ahliyah* (popular) schools and private schools, namely, Al-Ulliyah Al-Uthmaniyyah Al-Islamiyyah (the Islamic Ottoman College), which was known for its role in supporting and enhancing Arab nationalism. This political group supported the idea of having Lebanon as part of the Arab *ummah*. The call for decentralization could hardly be noticed among the needs of the above-mentioned ideologist groups.¹⁴

The two major newspapers issued in Palestine prior to World War I and after, namely *Al-Karmel* and *Filistin*, represented the two existing intellectual and political tendencies. Najib Nassar, the owner and editor-in-chief of *Al-Karmel* could be considered a Palestinian national who prompted Palestinian action in resisting Zionism. Issa Al-Issa, the owner and editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Filistin*, meanwhile, could be viewed as an Arab nationalist who looked upon Palestine and the Palestine Question as an issue before the Arab nationalist movement.

Furthermore, Al-Hizb Al-Watani (the National Party) could be seen as a demonstration of the trend of local politics and patriotism that existed in Palestine. Al-Sheikh Suleiman At-Taji Al-Farouqi was the founder of this party, which was formed as a political body whose goals included resis-

¹⁴ Abdelaziz Ad-Duri, *At-Takwn At-Tarikhi Lil-Ummah Al-Arabiyyah* (The Historical Foundation of the Arab Nation). Markiz Dirasat Al-Wihdh Al-Arabiyyah, 1984, p. 244.

tance to Zionism. It also considered the need for locating resources as a means for developing Palestine. Moreover, it took responsibility for utilizing legal means in encountering the Zionist intrusion into Palestine, always endeavoring to enlighten the *ummah* and raise its awareness of the dangers of Zionism. The leaders constantly reminded the Ottoman Government of its responsibilities toward Palestine as part of the Empire in regard to its responsibility for enacting and enforcing laws prohibiting Zionist immigration.¹⁵

Localism and patriotism did not hinder the efforts of the Arab nationalists. In the period 1909-1914, the Arab nationalist movement took a serious course. The chauvinistic approach adopted by the Turks from 1909 onward elevated nationalist enthusiasm while pushing the Arab leaders to act more vigorously and in a more organized manner. This period, therefore, witnessed the formation of Arab secret societies that called for Arab independence from the Turks.

Al-Jam'iyah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Fateh (the Young Arab Society) came into being as a result of the effort of its three cofounders, namely, Ahmad Qadri, Awni Abdul Hadi and Rustum Haidar, who agreed to commit themselves diligently to serving the *ummah* and the motherland. The number of members of this society increased rapidly to 20 men, and in 1911, an administrative body for the society was established in Paris. The main goal of the Society was to accomplish an Arab renaissance that could aid the Arab *ummah* in reaching developed and advanced nations. Its leaders did not include the word "independence" in the programs and publications of the Society, though they acted secretly to achieve the goal of Arab independence.

The preconditions for joining the ranks of the Society were confidentiality, faithfulness, adherence to the ideology, Arab nationalism, and accepting decisions taken in accordance with the view of the majority without reservation. Due to these preconditions, the Society was well organized and characterized by secrecy, which succeeded in deterring the Ottoman Government's constant attempts to infiltrate it. The headquarters of the Society, for security reasons, stayed in Paris until 1913 and then moved to Beirut, from where the Society moved to Damascus one year later.¹⁶

¹⁵ Bayan Nwhid Al-Hut, *Al-Qiyadat w-Al-Mua'ssasat As-Siyasiyyah fi Filistin 1917-1948*. Beirut: Mua'ssasat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1981, p. 43.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33

While Al-Fateh was a political society, Al-Ahd represented the Arab military elite. Formed as a secret society in 1913, its membership was composed mainly of Arab military officers in the Ottoman army, which is why it is sometimes referred to as the military wing of the Arab nationalist movement. Among its leaders and founders were Aziz Ali Al-Misri, Awni Al-Qadamani, Salim Al-Jazairi, and Nuri As-Said. Its main objectives could be summarized as the call for Arab independence and total respect for Islamic values and the institution of the Caliphate.¹⁷

Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah Al-Idariyyah Al-Uthmaniyyah (a Party for the Decentralization of Ottoman Administration) was formed in Cairo in 1912 as a non-secret society. Its main objectives were twofold. Firstly, it intended to demonstrate to the Ottomans the need for decentralized rule. Secondly, it took charge of gathering the support of the Arab masses for the idea of a decentralized Ottoman administration. Its main leadership body was composed of 20 men known to possess knowledge, experience, and strong personalities. Although they resided in Egypt, this body was to choose an Executive Committee of six leaders and had branches in all the main cities of Greater Syria, all of which were in constant contact with other Arab societies in the region.

Among the founders and leaders of this party were Rafia Al-Azm, a Muslim from Damascus, Rashid Rida, a Muslim from Trebili, Iskandar Ammun, a Lebanese Christian and Fuad Al-Khatib, a Lebanese Sunni Muslim. Among the Palestinian members were Salim Abdul Hadi, a Muslim from Jenin, Hafiz As-Said, a Muslim from Jaffa, and Ali Al-Nashashibi, a Muslim from Jerusalem.¹⁸

Al-Muntada Al-Adabi (The Literary Gathering), which was established in Constantinople, was in contact with various Arab societies in Syria. Although it started as a literary society, it was designed to be a political forum with apolitical objectives. In other words, it acted in accordance with opposing groups to the Ottoman establishment. It initially included among its members politicians, officials, parliamentarians, some army officers in the capital, Muslim *ulama*, some Arab members of the Parliament who supported and sympathized with the society, and the leaders of the Arab nationalist movement from Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. Among the members from Palestine were Arif Al-Arif, Rushdi Ash-

¹⁷ Jabbari, op. cit., p. 48.

¹⁸ George Antonius, *Yaqzat Al-Arab* (Arab Awakening), translated by Nasir Ad-Din Al-Assad and Ihsan Abbas. Beirut: Dar Al-Ilm Lil-Malayin, 1966, p. 185.

Shawwa, Bassem Bseiso, Mustafa Al-Husseini and others. This club continued with its activities until the Ottomans closed it down in 1915.¹⁹

The Arab students from Palestine established a students society in the Ottoman capital in September 1912. The society named Al-Alam Al-Akhdar (The Green Flag) aimed at strengthening the ties between Arab students in different high schools, educating them, and preparing them for developing their society. Among its founders were Bassem Bseiso, Mustafa Al-Husseini, and Shukri Gushih. The society issued the journal *Lisan Al-Arab*.²⁰

Thus far, Arab nationalists had practiced political activism secretly or overtly through the formation of societies and parties. The organizations as platforms were also designed to serve as vehicles that allowed for the sharing of views and the gathering and spreading of the idea of Arabism. The fragmentation within the movement resulting from the variety of ideas and organizational forms, however, necessitated the search for a new platform to harmonize the movement. This could only be achieved through extensive discussion and the formulation of a program or scheme to bring about independence from the Turks. It required the formation of a united Arab political entity.

The Arab leaders at that time called for holding an Arab Congress to discuss Arab issues and problems in relation to the Turks. However, this congress could not be convened in the Ottoman Empire. The Arab intellectual and nationalist leaders decided, therefore, to hold the First Arab Congress in Paris in 1913, the idea being that they would meet and discuss and make decisions pertaining to important issues far away from Ottoman harassment.

At the Congress, the Arab nationalist leaders agreed to call on the Ottoman Government to improve the conditions of its Arab subjects and to consider Arabic an official language, as it is the language of the Qur'an. These demands were subsequently submitted by the Congress to the Ottoman Government. In short, one may say that the program and the decisions adopted by the conferees were general and vague. The Palestinian issue, meanwhile, was noticeably marginalized by those leaders in their discussion of topics that were of greater importance to the Arab *ummah*.

¹⁹ Jabbari, op. cit.

²⁰ Amin Said, *Al-Thawrah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Kubra* (The Great Palestinian Revolt). Cairo: Matba'at Issa Al-Halabi, 1989, Volume I, p. 46.

THE ARAB MOVEMENT AND THE PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE

Letters of support were sent by Palestinians to the major participants in the conference, emphasizing the call for Arab support to Palestinians as a way of putting an end to the Zionist danger. Out of 387 letters, 139 came from Palestine. Despite this fact, the conferees ignored the call for encountering Zionism and its dangers, which could explain the Palestinian Arabs' reservations and criticism concerning the Paris conference. In an editorial in *Al-Karmel* newspaper, the writer questions:

“Should we allow the Zionists to revive their nationalism at the expense of our nationalism? Have we agreed upon selling them our land piece by piece until they expel us from our land in groups and on an individual basis?”

In another call by *Al-Karmel* to every person interested in the fate of the country, the newspaper harshly criticized the attitude of both the Arab conferees and the Party of Decentralized Ottoman Administration. This call by *Al-Karmel* stated that the Arab leaders were not expected to favor the Jewish interest:

“You must have occupied yourself with pointing out to the Ottoman officials that the expropriation of land by Zionist agencies and societies would weaken the Arab nationalism and consequently trouble the Ottoman League. Observing this awkward situation and not doing anything to change it could imply that your ties with your Arab and Ottoman brothers in Palestine do not exist. It could also be an indication of a lack of awareness on your part of the fact that losing Palestine would diminish any hope for economic prosperity in the Arab World.”

On 25 July 1913, *Al-Karmel* published a criticism of the leaders of the party of the decentralized Ottoman administration. At the time of the Arab Congress in particular, those leaders endeavored to discuss with the Zionists the prospect of a joint effort against the Ottomans. *Al-Karmel* gave up hope in regard to those champions of reform among the Arab leaders and those of the decentralized Ottoman administration:

“We hoped that they would rid us of Zionist threats and dangers. We comprised a group of people who had hoped the best for their leaders.

This team possessed tremendous power; not to ignore that Palestine, their country, was part of the Ottoman Empire.”²¹

Under the title “Alummi Khiyamak Ya Israel,” Issa Al-Issa wrote in *Filistin* that the Arab Congress in Paris proved, beyond any doubt, its bankruptcy. None among the participants could be questioned by parliament except the Lebanese delegation, because this delegation was chosen by an elected body to represent the people in the Congress. And no one could tell what this delegation would face, since the results of the Congress were contrary to all expectations. The situation of the Arab *ummah*, Al-Issa added, spoke clearly in objection to those decisions adopted by the Congress in a similar manner to the Jewish tribes who spoke about Rahvaam, the son of King Solomon: “We have no luck with the son of David, so pack your tents.”²²

The harsh criticism of both Nassar and Al-Issa and their disappointment could be understood in terms of their assessment of the existing relationship between Palestine and the Arab *ummah*. Their high expectation of the Arab Congress in Paris and of the Arab national leaders could have caused this disappointment. A regular observer would have been shocked too, especially when he tried to assess Arab nationalist Palestine and its cause in relation to the Arab World. In other words, it is astonishing to find Arab leaders ignoring the Palestinian issue in a conference, when they supposedly placed the Palestinian cause at the core of the Arab problem.

Najib Azuri, for instance, pointed out that there existed two groups of the same nature, which were at the same time contradictory. On one side was the awakening of the Arab *ummah*. On the other was the Jewish effort to rebuild an old Israeli political entity. In the long run, the fate of those two movements was to exist in a constant struggle with each other until one would come to defeat the other. And the fate of the whole world as it was known to them was bound to the results of the struggle between the peoples of two different doctrines.²³

Khalil As-Sakakini, an Arab nationalist and Palestinian Christian, also pointed to the dangers of Zionism in regard to the Arab World in his diary on 23 February 1914. He stated that his hatred of Zionism had not

²¹ Ibrahim Ibrash, *Al-Bu'd Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah: Filistin Bayn Al-Qawmiyyah Al-Arabiyyah w-Al-Wataniyyah Al-Filistiniyyah* (Dimensions of the Palestinian Question: Palestine between the Arab Nationality and Palestinian Identity). Beirut: Markiz Dirasat Al-Windh Al-Arabiyyah, 1987, pp. 23-24.

²² Issa Al-Issa, “Alummu Khiymaku Isra'il,” *Filistin*, Jaffa, Wednesday, 3 August 1913.

²³ Al-Hut, “Al-Qadiyyah,” *Filistin*, p. 40.

evolved from a hatred of the Israeli people and their prosperity, but rather from his opposition to the doctrine itself and the Zionist attempts to build a nation at the expense of others. By conquering Palestine, Zionism had conquered the heart of the Arab World, since Palestine is the linking point between the Arabian Peninsula, Egypt and Africa. The Jewish occupation of Palestine would end the Arab contact, especially between the African and Asian Arabs.²⁴

Arabs in general, and educated Arabs in particular, were aware of the Zionist danger before the Paris Conference. Mustafa Afandi, a teacher of mathematics at a Jerusalem middle school, displayed a heightened awareness concerning Zionist threats and colonial dangers. In an article he wrote, he stated that Russia, which represented great oppression and torture, presented itself as a supporter of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire whenever the Ottoman Government implemented its laws. The Russian Ambassador in the Empire always attempted to present himself as a champion of Jewish rights, whether the Jews were the aggressors or the victims. Mustafa Afandi added that the Russians were interested in pushing the Jews out of their own country and into the Holy Land. Thereby, they could instigate trouble and disturbances for the Ottomans. The Russians then could use this situation to interfere in Ottoman domestic affairs.

The British, according to Mustafa Afandi, wanted to see a Greater Syria that was separated from Egypt, clearly regarding unity as a source of strength. This separation could only be achieved through the occupation of the Syrian country by a foreign nation. The British, he continued, decided to support the Jews and to help them establish a political entity in Palestine, where the British could preserve their interests and existence in Egypt.²⁵

Based on the attitude of major figures in the Arab region, one could grasp the scope of the awkwardness attached to the attitude that was adopted by the Arab nationalists in Paris in 1913. This obviously made the attitude of the leaders of the Decentralization Party more strange and surprising. However, digging deep into the ideology and intellectual platform of the party of decentralization of the Ottoman administration explains the apparent paradox in their attitude.

In 1913, the head of the branches of the party on decentralization of Ottoman administration in Syria wrote to the head courtier of the party in

²⁴ As-Sakakini, Khalil. *Yawmiyat Khalil As-Sakakini* (Diary of Khalil As-Sakakini). Jerusalem: Al-Matba'ah At-Tijariyyah, 1955, pp. 46-56.

²⁵ *Filistin*, Wednesday, 26 July 1911.

Cairo. He stated that he and his colleagues had decided to admit to the party membership only those who adhered to Islam. On 25 August 1913, Rafiq Al-Azm, the Secretary of the party replied, emphasizing that he spoke for himself and indicating that Christians were brothers of the Muslims in terms of nationality, language and interest. He made it clear that he cared little for those whose minds and hearts had been blinded by God and who believed that Muslim-Christian brotherhood was a sort of infidelity or a means to hand the region to foreign domination. According to him, those people were either ignorant or hypocrites. Although he did not go so far as to accuse them of treason, he made it clear, instead, that these people considered themselves reformers but did not see clearly the interests of their nation, and that their ignorance and stagnant attitude would lead to the loss of the country. He continued to say that his party was comprised of both Muslims and non-Muslims (Christians and Israelis). By using the word 'motherland,' he asked for admission to the ranks and membership of the party Christians, Muslims and Jews; those who are known for honesty, trustworthiness and good manners. In addition to that, he called for the relationship between Christians, Jews, and Muslims to be strengthened.

Based on this ideological platform, Dr. Nasim Maltuh, a Jew from Jaffa joined the party in 1913. Mohammed Ash-Shanti, one of the active members of the Decentralization Party in Palestine, wrote to the party in Cairo, informing it that he had recruited a number of Jews as members in his party.

The letter sent by Rafiq Al-Azm, the Chairman of Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah, to Mahmoud Al-Humusani in Beirut dated 20 June 1914 explained the ideology of the party and the attitude adopted toward the Zionists and the Jews. In this letter, he indicated that when Hizb Al-Lamarkaziyyah was formed as an affiliate body within the Arab nationalist movement, the Zionists had taken the initiative and sent one of their leaders to discern the state of affairs. This leader, who had been sent earlier to Cairo, subsequently took charge of the meeting and negotiating with the leaders of the party in Paris on issues relating to the status of the Jews in Palestine. In response, Al-Azm and his colleagues informed him that

“we are a group whose doctrine is democracy. For us, all people in Syria are equal in terms of their rights and duties. If the Jews were to become genuine citizens of the motherland, they would consequently be similar to other fellow citizens in this land, especially when the Zionist immigration to the country is halted. None of them is allowed then without becoming a true Ottoman citizen. They are supposed to teach Arabic in their schools. They are also supposed to allow chil-

dren in general in this country to obtain an education in these schools.”²⁶

It is not surprising then to find harsh criticism of the call for the decentralization of the Ottoman administration in *Filistin* on 19 April 1913 under the title “Hal Tasluh Al-Lamarkaziyyah fi Filistin.” The editor-in-chief expressed his real surprise at the call of the people of Beirut for a reformation through decentralizing the Ottoman administration in various provinces of the Empire. He did not necessarily question their intention, but rather criticized the means of reform. For him, the decentralization did not meet the demands of each and every province in the Empire: for example the success of its application in Beirut, the city of science and trade, would not necessarily be the same as in other parts of the region. He used the example of Palestine, seemingly to criticize the leaders of the Decentralization Party. Palestine, according to his argument, was an agrarian society, the wealth and source of income of its inhabitants being based mainly on land, the greatest portion of which was owned by a small number of wealthy and influential families and local leaders. The peasants, meanwhile, constituted the largest portion of the population. Regardless of the types of relationships in production existing in Palestine, the country, he emphasized, had become subject to Zionist interests, and over 100,000 different forms of adherence and loyalty existed. He posed a rhetorical question: Who would guarantee, upon the implementation of decentralization in Palestine, that the Zionist leaders would not ask their followers in Palestine to acquire Ottoman citizenship? Were they to do this, the Zionists would be able to use their wealth and influence to obtain the power of the majority, going on to become members in the municipalities, the administrations, the general council of the Mutasarrifiyah. Palestine would then become in reality a purely Jewish country.²⁷

The assessment by the Palestinians of decentralization in the Ottoman Empire is essentially connected with their generally held views concerning Palestinian citizenship and nationality. Palestinian citizens are primarily composed of Muslims and Christians. According to Rawhi Al-Khalidi, both Muslims and Christians are deeply rooted in Palestine; their history goes back to ancient times and the waves of Semitic immigration from the Arabian Peninsula.²⁸

²⁶ Suleiman Musa, *Al-Harakah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Marhali Al-Ula Lin-Nahda Al-Arabiyyah Al-Hadithah* (The Arab Movement: The First Stage of the Modern Arab Awakening), 2nd ed. Beirut: Dar An-Nassar Lin-Nashr, 1977, pp. 2-64.

²⁷ *Filistin*, 19 April 1913, p.1

²⁸ Ragib, “Al-Jinsiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah,” *Filistin*, 4 June 1913.

In the period 1909-1914, the Palestinians were forced to argue and present their evaluation and assessment of various matters. The assessment took into account the Palestinians' needs and the intention to raise the efficacy of their resistance to Zionist immigration and settlement. Importantly enough, this period witnessed a number of developments that could explain the Palestinians' interest in accelerating resistance and their self-reliance in the struggle to liberate Palestine from Zionist hegemony. These developments were as follows:

Firstly, if the Ottoman Parliament were reinstalled, they could use their advantage there in order to put an end to Zionist immigration and settlement in Palestine.

Secondly, the Unionists returned to power. Later, Hizb Al-Itilaf Wal-Hurriyyah (the Party on Coalition and Freedom) assumed leadership and formed the government, which shook the Palestinians' reliance on the Ottomans in their resistance to Zionism. These two groups opened negotiations with the Zionist agencies, hoping, among other things, to obtain Zionist financial support in a bid to remedy the Empire's economic and financial ills. In return, they were ready to accept a gradual termination of the Ottoman laws that had been enacted earlier in order to put on hold on Zionist immigration to Palestine.

Thirdly, the vagueness and ambiguity characterizing the ideology of Arab nationalism made the movement unreliable in the struggle with Zionism. The Arab Congress in Paris in 1913 was clearly a case in point.

The Ottoman Parliament (Majlis Al-Mab'uthan), which was installed upon the restoration of the Constitution of 1908, was utilized by the Palestinians as a means to resist the Zionist immigration. In this majlis, Rawhi Al-Khalidi – who was keen to point to the Zionist dangers and ambitions – Said Al-Husseini and Hafiz As-Sa'ad were representatives of the Jerusalem metropolitan area. Ash-Sheikh Ahmad Al-Khammash represented Nablus, while As'ad Ash-Shuqeiri represented Akka.²⁹ By writing articles for newspapers and giving speeches in the Ottoman Parliament, Al-Khalidi endeavored to present the Palestinian issue and the expedition against Zionism.³⁰

Rawhi Al-Khalidi, prior to 1908, was for a long time the dean of the Ottoman diplomatic circle in Bordeaux, France. He was also once elected, after 1908, as vice-chairman of the Ottoman Parliament. He fully understood the objectives and ends of Zionism, and together with Said Al-

²⁹ *Al-Hilal*, Cairo, December 1908, part 3, p. 177.

³⁰ *Al-Mawsu'ah Al-Filistiniyyah* (Palestinian Encyclopedia), Volume 2, 1st ed., 1989, p. 491.

Husseini and Ragheb An-Nashashibi, called upon the Ottoman parliamentarians to legislate against Zionist immigration to Palestine and the expropriation of land. The Fall of 1912 witnessed a heated parliamentary session during which the Arab representatives complained that the Zionists had expropriated a large area of agricultural land in Marj Ibn Amir.³¹

Al-Karmel was the first Palestinian newspaper to shed light on the danger that the Zionists posed to Palestine and the Arab region. The editor-in-chief of this newspaper, which was first issued in Haifa in 1909, launched a severe attack on Zionism. He also published a book entitled *As-Sahyuniyyi, Tarikaha, Wa Garadaha, Wa Ahamiyyataha*, in which he dug deeply into the history of Zionism. He also revealed the basis on which Zionism was structured and pointed to the deceptive means that the Zionists used to achieve their goals. In addition, he accused the Ottoman Empire of failing to live up to its responsibilities toward Palestine and the Palestinians, emphasizing that the Ottomans had not been active in preventing the Zionist drift into Palestine.

Filistin, meanwhile, which was issued in Jaffa in 1911, supported *Al-Karmel* in its endeavor to unveil the Zionist scheme and plans. Its owner and editor-in-chief, Issa Al-Issa, issued several articles that were a translation of a work by Menahem Ostshken, a historian who specialized in Zionism, entitled *The Zionist Political Program*. Al-Issa should be credited for raising, with this translation, people's awareness concerning the dangers posed by the Zionists.³²

Najib Nassar called for holding a Palestinian Congress as a means to counter the 11th World Zionist Congress and to resist the Zionist invasion of Palestine. The Palestinian leaders of Nablus received this call with enthusiasm and consequently held a Non-Zionist Congress in August 1913. The conferees called upon the Ottomans to put an end to selling the land by an open auction, saying that they should have sold this land to the farmers who cultivated it, allowing them to finance the cost of the land through easy payments. The petition that included these demands was signed by Abdul Fattah Tuqan, Kamil Hashim, Ibrahim Abdul Hadi, Hasan Hammad and Nimr An-Nabulsi.³³

Al-Karmel could also be credited with the call for organizing the national effort to counter Zionism. This role must have contributed to the formation of the Jam'iyyat Mukafahat As-Sahyuniyyah (Zionism Resistance

³¹ Al-Hut, op.cit., p. 43.

³² Mahafzah op. cit., p. 21.

³³ *Al-Karmel*, Haifa, 12 August 1913.

Society), which had headquarters in Nablus and branches in various Palestinian cities. The Society encouraged the use of mass demonstration as a means to protest against the selling of land by the government in an open auction. It also expressed its opposition by sending telegraphs to Constantinople, in which it conveyed suggestions that the government should give land to the cultivators who, according to the Society, would be able to discharge themselves from their financial obligations to the government through easy payments.

The Society situated its headquarters and carried out its activities in Nablus, because Nablus at that time did not house influential Jews and Zionist figures, meaning it did not face any counter-resistance. Some sources suggest that by 31 August 1913, the Society began to gather strength and accomplish victories. This date also marked the starting point of its serious activities against Zionism.³⁴

Al-Karmel, *Filistin*, and *Al-Munadi* newspapers in Palestine in addition to *Al-Muqtabas* in Damascus and *Al-Mufid* in Beirut continued their work to unveil the Zionist methods employed in Palestine. They also criticized and resisted the call of some Arab leaders for reaching a mutual understanding with the Zionists which appeared in both *Al-Ahram* and *Al-Muqatam* newspapers.³⁵

The Palestinians' strong stand on the issue of Arab independence from the Turks was equal to their vehement opposition to the Zionist plans in Palestine. They therefore diligently defended Arab ambitions and interests regarding independence and the formation of a united Arab state.

The representatives of Palestine in Majlis Al-Mab'uthan played an effective role in forming the 'Arab Representatives Bloc' in March 1911. This bloc, together with the Albanians, Armenians and some Turkish representatives formed Hizb Al-Hurriyah Wal-I'Tilaf (The Freedom and Coalition Party), which was known for its adoption of the idea of offering administrative independence to various nationalities in the Empire. It primarily exported the idea of implementing decentralization of the Ottoman administration in the Empire. Among the Palestinian members of this party were Rawhi Al-Khalidi and Said Al-Husseini.³⁶

³⁴ Kayyali, op. cit., p. 59.

³⁵ Qasimiyyah Khayriyyah, "Mawaqif, Arabiyyah Min At-Tafahum Ma As-Sahyuniyya", in Seqali, Samir. *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah w-As-Sira' Al-Arabi As-Sahyuni, Part. 1.*

³⁶ Assad Dagir, *Ath-Thawrah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Kubra Muqadimatuha, Asbabuha, wa Nata'juha* (The Great Arab Revolt). Cairo: 1916, p. 55.

In the light of this and other developments mentioned, one may understand the Palestinian support of the restoration of the Ottoman Constitution and the reinstatement of the parliament on the anniversary of the constitutional revolution of 1908. The correspondent of *Filistin* in Nablus wrote,

“On a day like this memorable day, the Ottoman *ummah* regained its constitution, which was curtailed for almost one third of a century. During this period, it faced so many complex obstacles, which deterred its reformation and prevented its progress. In those days, the country was targeted by those who had interests. God then provided it with free men (unionists). They themselves rushed to sacrifice the motherland.”³⁷

The Palestinian enthusiasm for the constitution and the parliament could be understood in terms of two major themes. Firstly, the constitution and the liberal atmosphere along with the parliament could provide the Palestinians with the channels needed to influence Ottoman policy, meaning it might be possible to effectively resist the Zionist drift into Palestine.

Secondly, the Palestinian activists seemed to find the parliament a reliable tool for accomplishing Arab independence from the Turks. In other words, instead of using violent means and struggle with the Turks to achieve independence, they appeared to opt for peaceful means.

THE ARABS AND WORLD WAR I

The Arabs in Syria seemed to have lost faith in the call on the Turks to grant the Arab region independence from the Empire. Consequently, they began to search for external support for the endeavor. According to British documents, a group of Druze from Lebanon and Damascus contacted the British Consul in Beirut in 1913 and asked for British aid to the Arabs in the struggle with the Turks. In the same year, a Muslim delegation visited Kitchener in Cairo and proposed that Greater Syria be annexed to Egypt, suggesting that Syria be offered its own self-rule and administration. Kitchener, in response, handled the proposal. By late 1913, the participants in the Arab Congress in Paris had sent delegations composed of active participants in the Congress to the French Foreign Ministry and to the embassies of the great powers, where they were supposed to hand copies of the congressional decision to the European officials.

³⁷ *Filistin*, 29 July 1911, p. 2.

On 24 February 1914, the British Ambassador in Constantinople wrote to the British Foreign Minister and indicated that a number of Arab officers had visited the embassy and inquired what the British attitude toward the Arabs would be in case a state of emergency occurred. At the time, Aziz Ali Al-Masri was in prison, waiting for judicial delivery of a verdict, and the Arabs petitioned the foreign ministers in Constantinople presenting his case and calling for support.³⁸

Based on the British documents, the Arab leaders seemed to have initiated the establishment of an alliance between the Arabs and the British. Their move made the British pay great attention to the possibility of having an alliance with the Arab nationalist movement in the region. This move possibly had an impact on the eventual results of the Arab region by the end of World War I, as it exposed the Arabs' limited alternative for an alliance in the war.

The British Government favored an alliance with the Arab movement. They attempted to prevent the Ottoman Sultan from declaring a holy war against the allies. The Arabs could also contribute to the British world effort through their internal work against the Ottomans. Furthermore, the alliance could provide the British with a guarantee concerning their interests in the region, at least during the war. Moreover, the Arab leaders showed great enthusiasm for fighting the Ottomans, which would add to the British war effort and the allies' vested interests in winning the global war.

Immediately after the breakout of World War I, Al-Jam'iyyah Ath-Thawriyyah Al-Arabiyyah, (The Arab Revolutionary Society), issued a call to all Arabs, descendants from Qahtan. In its call, it emphasized that Muslims, Christians and Jewish Arabs were related in Arabism and nationalism, demanding that the Arabs take care of their brothers in Yemen, Asir, Najd and Iraq and defend them from the threats of the enemy. Arabs in Greater Syria and Iraq were supposed to work together along with their fellow nationalists. In this call, the Arab Revolutionary Society asserted "The Muslims, Christians and Jews among you must work hand in hand for the interest of the motherland and the *ummah*. You all inhabit and invest in the same land, you speak a single language. Therefore, you must be a united *ummah* and a single hand. You must aid each other, unite and support each other." The Society again called on the Muslims not to discriminate against Christians and Jews since they all worshipped the one

³⁸ Musa, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

God and asked Christian and Jewish Arabs to work hand in hand with the Muslims.

This liberal tone in the Arabs' calls during World War I could also be seen in the letter written by Abdul Ghani Al-Arisi after he was arrested in late July 1915. In this letter, he pointed out that religious and racial prejudice had never been contemplated by Arab nationalists. He demanded that the Arabs not be divided into denominational and ethnic groups. According to Al-Arisi, Christians, Muslims, Jews, Druze and atheists were all Arabs and should act in accordance with Arab interests. Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca wholly supported Al-Arisi's premise and called upon the Arabs to consider the Jews who resided in the Arab World to be Arabs.³⁹

This liberal and tolerant stand adopted by the Arab nationalist movement could not be seen as an unusual development. Its roots go back to the ideological stand to which the Arab nationalist movement committed itself back in 1913 at the time of the Arab Congress in Paris. This liberalist ideal could have brought about a concerted Arab effort in dealing with the issue of Arab independence and unity. However, it did not take into account the fact that Palestine at that time was the target of Zionist plans and schemes. However, this Arab liberal show probably strengthened the alliance with the British, since Britain would have favored liberalism over Ottoman Islamism during World War I, the time of polarization and alliances in the world.

The British, in their attempts to create an alliance with the Arab movement, continued to contact the Arab leadership. The Arab nationalist movement, however, was divided on the issue of alliance. The first faction, which was led by Prince Abdullah, the son of Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca, was enthusiastic concerning an alliance with the British. The second one led by his brother Faisal, showed reluctance. The meeting held in Damascus upon Prince Faisal's visit to Syria in 1915 resolved the problem by issuing the Damascus Protocol as the basis for any alliance negotiations with the British. This protocol underlined the demand for Arab independence and unity under the leadership of the Caliphate and determined the boundaries of the Arab World. Moreover, it called for the substitution of the capitulation granted to the Europeans according to the Ottoman calls for the treaty of mutual defense with the British, where Arab and Britain would be equal partners.⁴⁰

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66.

⁴⁰ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

This protocol constituted the main basis for the Al-Hussein-MacMahon correspondence. In Al-Hussein's letter to MacMahon, dated 10 July 1915, the writer asserted that Britain should recognize Arab independence within these boundaries: Marcin and Adana in the north, from East Birsha up to the Gulf of Al-Basrah and the Indian Ocean in the south, and in the east the Red Sea and the Mediterranean with the exception of Aden on the southern front boundaries, which could maintain its status. England, Al-Hussein added, should recognize an Arab Caliphate.

On 25 October, the British Ambassador in Cairo, in response to Al-Hussein's letter, accepted the Arab demands, mentioning one reservation with regard to the French interests in Lebanon.⁴¹ This acceptance must have been obligatory to the British Government. It was presented very clearly through correspondence between the British Ambassador in Cairo, who was granted total authority over decision making on behalf of the British Government and Sharif Al-Hussein, who was looked upon as an official spokesman of the whole Arab people.

This correspondence could have been an impetus behind Arab participation in the war in accordance with the Arab alliance with the British. The policy of Jamal Pasha greatly elevated the tension between the Arabs and Turks, which must have easily provoked the Arab leadership to start an Arab revolt.

Jamal Pasha repeatedly sentenced Arabs, including many Palestinians, to death. On one occasion, he hanged 12 young men in Jerusalem, in addition to the Mufti of Gaza, Ahmad Arif Al-Husseini, and his son from the well-known Al-Husseini family.⁴²

On 6 May 1916, Jamal Pasha hanged a new group of Arab leaders after Prince Faisal made an unsuccessful attempt to get him to grant them a pardon. Upon his return to Damascus from Beirut, Faisal informed his colleagues of his assessment of the Turks' intentions as exposed in Jamal Pasha's acts. They all agreed upon the necessity of Prince Faisal departing immediately for Mecca in preparation for the breakout of an Arab revolt. The Al-Hussein correspondence was not yet completed; in fact, Sharif Al-Hussein and the Arab leaders were under the impression that the British would live up to their promises to the Arabs.

⁴¹ J.M.N. Jeffries, *Filistin Ilaykum Al-Haqiqah* (The Truth About Palestine), Cairo: Al-Ha'yah Al-Masriyyah Al-'Amah Lil-Talif w-An-Nashr, 1971, pp. 118-133.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

The Arab Revolt started as planned by Arab leaders on 10 June 1916.⁴³ The Palestinian participation in the secret stages of the Arab Revolt came through the activities of the enrolled Palestinian members of Al-Fateh and Al-Ahd. In the midst of World War I, and in spite of the difficulties and miserable conditions that existed in the country, great numbers of Palestinians volunteered in the army, signing their names with the volunteer registration office that the British established in 1917. The number of Palestinian volunteers was estimated at several thousand, which could seem high in terms of the condition of the country and the divided allegiances of young Palestinians between the two struggling camps. Al-Haj Amin Al-Husseini, who was still a young man at the time, played an active role in recruiting volunteers, for which purpose he was obliged to travel to various parts of the country.⁴⁴

The Palestinians' enthusiasm in regard to participation in the Arab Revolt of 1916 stemmed from the way in which they perceived themselves as part of the Arab *ummah* and the hope that the revolt would result in resolving the Palestinian issue and putting an end to Zionist immigration to Palestine. Contrary to these and the fellow Arab brothers' expectations, the British signed the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916, according to which the Arab region was to be divided into French and British spheres of influence. More importantly, the British issued the Balfour Declaration of November 1917, in which the British Government granted the Jewish people a homeland in Palestine.⁴⁵

The British moves of 1916 and 1917 contradicted the British promises to the Arabs. According to Jeffries, Palestine, in the British agreement with the Arabs, was to be granted independence and self-rule, similar to Al-Hijaz and any other Arab province included in the agreed Arab independence. He added that the British denial of Palestine's independence was a manifestation of the British commitment to political Zionism. He went on to say that the British officials, back in October 1915, had nothing in mind with respect to Palestine and Zionism except for including Palestine within the Arab independent commonwealth. It was never said at that time that Palestine would be totally or partially Jewish, and Palestine had not yet been subjected to political ends for the British and the Zionists. The map drawn for the Arab independence back then also included Palestine as part of the Arab commonwealth.⁴⁶

⁴³ Al-Hut, *Filistin*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 74 and 83.

⁴⁶ Jeffries, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

The promises and agreements that the British offered various parties during World War I could be understood as part of Britain's endeavor to accomplish its vested interest in winning the war. The Balfour Declaration of 1917 seemed to be grounded by two sets of objectives. On the one hand, the British were highly concerned with securing an alliance with Zionism as a means of bringing new parties to the Western alliance – mainly the United States – and improving their chances of winning the war. In addition to that, they tried to make Eastern European Jews support Zionism instead of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Furthermore, this declaration might be viewed as a natural outcome of the formation of the war cabinet of 1916 in which three active Zionists were major figures, namely, Prime Minister Lloyd George, the Minister of the Interior Herbert Samuel, and the person in charge of the Colonial Office, Arthur Balfour.

The British on the other hand could have considered highly the strategic importance of this declaration. In accordance with this theme, the Balfour Declaration could be viewed as the outcome of the British attempts to make use of the Jewish problem dating back to 1841 when the British moved to convince the Ottomans to open Palestine for Jewish immigration. The Jewish homeland in Palestine might have been looked upon by the British as a strategic asset and a reliable ally that could aid them in preserving and enhancing their interests in the Middle East.

While the Zionists' options varied, the Arab nationalist movement had limited choices. The Arabs could hardly participate in the war independently and had no other option than to ally themselves with England and France. Although the British might offer the Arabs promises of independence and freedom, they could easily back away from their commitments.

According to Jeffries, Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca, through the negotiations with the British representative in Cairo and through his clever use of political language, proved to be a stubborn and shrewd politician and negotiator. His orthodoxy was at the same time evident. Jeffries asserts that “we find him greatly interested in allying himself with us along with his great confidence of our promises.”⁴⁷

The above suggested a paradox in the British commitments to implement these promises, which is evident in Jeffries' argument. The British signed the agreement in 1916 and then issued the Balfour Declaration of 1917 while committing themselves to their promises to the Arabs, promises

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 15.

that were specified and clear in letter and spirit. Jeffries stated that “Great Britain was ready to recognize Arab independence within the areas included in the boundaries suggested by Sharif Al-Hussein of Mecca and will support this independence.” Palestine was included within these boundaries. The Arabs were free on their land to choose whatever suited their ambitions and needs. Jeffries added that importantly, the British agreed with Sharif Al-Hussein on Arab independence. According to that agreement, the British did not treat him as Sharif of Mecca but rather the sole representative of the entire Arab *ummah*, including the Palestinians. He also spoke on behalf of the Arab secret societies in which the Palestinians were active.⁴⁸

In the final analysis, the period under discussion can be considered a highly critical era in the history of Arabism and Palestinian national resistance, not least of all because it witnessed the birth of both an Arab nationalist and Palestinian national movement. The rise of the two movements was grounded on objective factors. The emergence of Arabism and the Arab nationalist movement, influenced by the Ottoman reformation effort, entailed depriving the old social classes in the Arab East of their influence. Therefore, Arab nationalists were instrumental in the formation of the Palestinian National Resistance, which came as a result of the peculiar status of Palestine in the late nineteenth and early 20th Century, dictated by the Zionist invasion of Palestine.

The Arab nationalist movement passed through some stages. In the first place, it emerged as a literary movement whose major concern was the revival of Arab literature and the Arabic language and culture. In the late 19th Century, this movement could be viewed as part of the Ottoman constitutional movement. In response to Sultan Abdul Hamid II, it stood for the restoration of the Constitution and the reinstatement of the parliament. After 1909, the Arab movement became more active against the Turks. Now with its own societies and organizations, its main concern became the materialization of Arab independence.

It could be said that the Arab nationalist movement lacked organizational or ideological cohesiveness and that it suffered from the absence of clear and well-defined programs and schemes to bring about the desired change. The Arab vanguard raised vague and ambiguous slogans, which did not necessarily serve the movement well during World War I, especially at the time of negotiating the prospect for an alliance with the British in the war.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

The Palestinian National Resistance found itself in an awkward situation. Since it was originally born within the Arab nationalist movement, the Palestinians were to play a significant role within the movement, while at the same time having to single-handedly resist Zionism within Palestine. This is not to neglect the fact that the Arab leaders were mainly concerned with the issue of Arab independence and unity. Although Palestine for them was an important part of the Arab World, it received minimal consideration.

This period could be regarded as highly significant in the history of both the Arab and Palestinian struggle, since it carried with it the basis for both the Arab nationalist movement and Palestinian National Resistance. The foundations and the character of each of these two movements, in addition to their interdependence on each other, would have serious ramifications for both, beginning at the time of the war and more clearly in the post-World War I period, up to 1939 and 1948, the period under study in this work.

THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT: A TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND A DECLINE

World War I, which resulted in worldwide turmoil, laid the foundations for a new global order. The international scene witnessed the fall of certain empires, while the victors could only impose the letter and spirit of this newly emerging global order. In the post-World War I period, the Arab World found itself subject to the imposed terms and conditions dictated by this emerging order, and the war, within this context, can be seen as a crucial turning point in modern Arab history. The victory enjoyed by the allies represented defeat for the Arab movement, a defeat that reflected itself in the world powers denying independence to the Arab region and an inability to establish a united Arab state under an Arab Caliphate. Moreover, the Arab World was divided in accordance with the interests of the victorious powers, as had been agreed upon in the Sykes-Picot Accord of 1916, the Balfour Declaration of 1917 and the San Remo Peace Conference in April 1920.

Obviously, the victorious powers had the ability to impose their will on nations that could not yet fight back. The Arab liberation movement, despite the fact that it had allied itself with the Western powers in the war, was – not surprisingly – prevented from realizing its goals of independence, unity and the establishment of an Arab commonwealth, a paradox that becomes all the more understandable in light of certain facts.

Firstly, the Arab alliance with the British in 1916 was an unbalanced one. The partners were not equal. Secondly, the Arab nationalist movement had limited options in terms of its alliances, which was something of which the British were well aware. Thirdly, the Movement had little or no leverage to use against the British in its bid for independence.

The limited leverage of the Arab National Movement and its failure to achieve its goals before the Arab masses can be explained by the following factors. Firstly, the Movement did not have a military heritage; therefore, it lacked the sources and means to cope militarily with colonial European powers. Secondly, it did not have a clear program. Its slogans and premises suffered from vagueness and ambiguity, which means there was no clear vision of the future. Thirdly, the Arab leaders were deeply

involved in politics, and political activism was their main road. Although they could negotiate with the British and the French, they realized that negotiation without access to military assets usually results in one party dictating to the other.

The post-World War I Arab World witnessed the rise of two struggling tendencies within the Arab liberation movement, namely the use of violence and non-collaboration versus the use of negotiation and collaboration with the Europeans. The members of the Palestinian national movement agreed to oppose the Zionist immigration and the settlements in Palestine as well as the Zionist desire to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine. They differed, however on the issue of whether confrontation or collaboration would be the right way to deal with the British.

This chapter will focus on the status of the Arab National Movement and the Palestinian national movement between 1917 and 1928. There are three themes on which the discussion will center: The period 1917 up to the end of 1920, which witnessed the early formation and struggle of the two different tendencies within the Arab Movement; the period of 1921 to 1928, which was characterized by a noticeable rising of the collaborationist tendency as the active force in Arab and Palestinian politics; and the Palestinian national movement, which suffered throughout the entire period a number of setbacks that laid the seeds for its gradual decline by 1929.

FRUSTRATED ASPIRATIONS AND AN UPRISING

During World War I, the British were concerned with forging an alliance with the Arab National Movement, though their consideration of the Zionist policy was serious and more defined. This policy was not merely the product of the war years but rather dates back in British history to the year 1840. The British were well aware of the sensitivity attached to the issue of Zionism as far as the Arabs and specifically the Palestinians were concerned. Consequently, they attempted to avoid discussing the issue publicly during the war. *Al-Qiblah* newspaper, issued by Sharif Hussein, included an article on Zionism in late 1916. In response, General McDuff, the head of British Intelligence, instructed General Clayton, the head of the Arab Office, to send a serious personal warning to Sharif Hussein of Mecca in which he directed him to avoid all discussion of such a sensitive subject.¹

¹ Abdul Wahhab Kayyali, *Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith*, (Modern History of Palestine), ed. 9. Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Arabiyyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 1985. P. 87

In spite of the precautions taken by the British to cover up their Zionist policy, the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917 – the thrust of the British Zionist policy – became known to the Arab army soon after it was issued. According to Nuri As-Said's speech before the London Conference on 13 February 1939, the Arab army that was in Al-Aqabah received the news about the Balfour Declaration in the year 1917. The army, quite naturally, was shocked by news of the declaration and, according to Said, decided to temporarily freeze the Arab-British alliance in the war and refrain from cooperating on a military level with the British. It also demanded British assurances that Sir McMahon's commitments vis-à-vis the Arab leadership would be honored.²

The British, whose desire to win the war meant they could not afford to lose an ally, were more than prepared to offer assurances, and Hogarth assured Sharif Hussein of Mecca that the Balfour Declaration would never result in the Palestinian Arab being ruled over by Jews. He went further to give the false impression that the Jewish homeland in Palestine would be to the Arabs' advantage. The friendly Zionist-Arab relationship, according to Hogarth, would help facilitate the strengthening of ties between the Hashemites and various states that were subject to Zionist influence. It was also noted that the investment of the wealth of the American and European Jewry that immigrated to Palestine would result in a tremendous improvement in the overall living conditions of both Jewish and Palestinian Arabs. It should be noted that this kind of statement had been made earlier, in 1839-1840, by Palmerston, who instructed the British Ambassador in Constantinople to convince the Ottoman Sultan of the advantages of Jewish immigration to Palestine. According to Hogarth, Sharif Hussein welcomed the idea of Jewish immigration and investment in all of the Arab region. Hogarth, it should be noted, spoke sarcastically of Hussein's enthusiasm for the idea, hence Hussein knew little of the economic conditions of Palestine.³

The political shrewdness of the British appears to have facilitated their efforts in dealing with the Arab leadership. Their adequate assessment of the Hashemite leadership of the Arab nationalist movement must have surely enabled them to overcome difficulties and obstacles that could have handicapped their Zionist policy. It also made them place great confidence in the Hashemite leadership, which, they believed, would aid them in promoting the Zionist idea of establishing a Jewish homeland in

² Kamil Mahmud Khillih, *Filistin w-Al-Intidab Al-Biritani 1922-1939* (Palestine and the British Mandate), ed.1. Tripoli, Libya: Al-Mua'ssasih Al-Ararabiyyah Lin-Nashr w-At-Tawzia', 1974, p. 174.

³ Leonard Stein, The Balfour Declaration Foundation. 1961, p. 633.

Palestine. In mid-February 1917, nine months before the Balfour Declaration was issued, Mark Sykes held a meeting with Dr. Chaim Weizmann and his colleagues at Graster House in London. He assured the group of Zionists that the Arabs would be ready for Arab-Zionist mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence as long as the Hashemites controlled the leadership of the Arab National Movement, adding that he had great faith in Prince Faisal, who had yet to secure for himself wide political fame.⁴

It is very possible that Sykes' and other British officials' estimation of the situation in the region might have guided the Zionist approach to the issue of a Jewish homeland in Palestine later on. The issuing of the Balfour Declaration in November 1917 – completed in mid-September 1918 – raised the Zionists' expectations concerning the establishment of the said Jewish homeland, causing them to call on the British to implement the Balfour Declaration immediately. Certainly, the British estimation of the status quo in the Arab region could be one of the reasons behind the Zionists' eagerness to form a commission, which, headed by Chaim Weizmann, visited Palestine in early 1918.

The Zionist Commission arrived in Egypt on 12 March 1918, where it was enthusiastically received by the Egyptian Jewry in Cairo and Alexandria. British officials in Cairo pressured Syrian Arab collaborators to meet with the Commission, the idea being that this would help in persuading the Palestinian Arabs to moderate their attitude toward Zionism. The British succeeded in their endeavor. The Zionists, together with those Arabs connected with the Arab Office in Cairo, met at the Shepherds Hotel in Jerusalem. Among the Arab participants were Faris Nimr, Rafiq Al-Azm, Rashid Rida, Ibrahim Ash-Shahbandar, Sheikh Kamil Al-Qassab and Khalid Al-Hakim.

The Zionist Commission requested that the Arab leaders illuminate their vision concerning the eventual Arab-Jewish relationship in Palestine. In response, one of the Syrians proposed that Muslims, Christians and Jews should be proportionally represented in a Palestinian Government, the idea being that this type of representation would preserve their rights and interests. He added that the Jews should have an independent representation in the Council, since it would be the only means of serving their interests. The Jews, according to this proposal, would one day become the majority. It was noted that this development would not damage the interests of Muslims and Christians, in spite of the fact that they would not

⁴ Anis Al-Sayigh, *Al-Hashimiyun wa Qadiyyat Filistin* (The Hashemites and the Question of Palestine). Sayda, Manshurat Jaridat Al-Muharrir w-Al-Maktabah Al-Masriyyah, 1966. P 68.

have independent representation in the government like the Jews. The Zionists, not surprisingly, welcomed the proposal.

The Syrians also suggested the formation of two councils that would represent both Jews and Arabs but that would be independent from the Government of Palestine. The councils, he suggested, would discuss and resolve each major conflict and misunderstanding between the people of the three monotheistic religions.

Upon the arrival in Palestine of the Zionist Commission on 18 April 1918, Storrs arranged for the commission to meet with the Mufti Kamel Al-Husseini, the Mayor of Jerusalem Musa Kazim and the head of Al-Ma'arif (the Department of Education).

During the meeting, which was held on 27 April 1918, Weizmann spoke about the benefits that Palestine would enjoy as a result of Zionist immigration and settlement, attempting, in the process, to ease Arab fears concerning the Balfour Declaration and Zionist ideas. In response, Kamel Al-Husseini expressed his appreciation of Dr. Weizmann's assurances. Weizmann's explanations and Al-Husseini's words aided in decreasing and removing many Palestinian fears and reservations concerning the Zionist intentions. Al-Husseini had said, for example, that he hoped that both Jews and Palestinians would work together with the intention of serving mutual interests and consequently the betterment of Palestine.⁵

Clayton, who was under pressure in Palestine and who wanted to ease the tension and facilitate the work of the Zionist Commission instructed the Arab Office in Cairo to send a delegation of Syrian leaders to Palestine. Included in the delegation were Rafiq Al-Azm, a Sunni Muslim from Syria affiliated with the Arab Office in Cairo, Suleiman Nassif, a Protestant and a Lebanese merchant, who was also affiliated with the Office, and Mukhtar As-Suluh, a collaborator with the British whom Clayton imposed on the other members of the delegation, none of whom trusted him.

The delegation arrived at the Jerusalem railway station in early May 1918. On 17 May, Rafiq Al-Azm spoke before a gathering composed of the traditional Palestinian leaders in Jerusalem. In his speech, he noted the role that the Arabs had played throughout history, highlighting the great advancement in the sciences and urbanization that they had been responsible for during the era of the Abbassid Caliphs, Ar-Rashid and Al-

⁵ *Filistin*, Jaffa, 16 May 1918.

Ma'moun. He added that the Arabs had continued to thrive until they came under Ottoman rule, which resulted in their humiliation, disunity, and societal regression. He then contrasted the situation under Turkish rule with that under the rule of the British, which could be characterized by solidarity and unity. He went further to thank the government on behalf of the *ummah* for all its good work and its contribution to the well being of the Arabs, putting an emphasis on the role that had been played by General Allenby in liberating the country from the Ottoman conquerors.

Al-Azm, after once again expressing the hope that Palestine was on the threshold of a period of real advancement and development, said that he hoped that Syria would follow the footsteps of Egypt after the war in terms of independence. He added that the Egyptians were anxious to support the Palestinian people in their plans to achieve agricultural and economic development and that in his view, advancement in Palestine could only be achieved through unity, solidarity and goodwill.⁶

In addition to this meeting, the Syrian delegation held several meetings with Muslim and Christian leaders in Jerusalem. According to the statement made by members of the delegation, the leaders were fully satisfied with the British rule but they vehemently opposed Zionism and would never accept Zionist domination of Palestine. The leaders, whose people had never experienced Jewish rule, expressed resentment concerning the British tendency to display a bias towards Jews in terms of commercial transactions. The Zionist arrogance and shows of military order could be viewed as reasons for the Palestinian leaders' discontent with Zionism. The Syrian delegation in response pointed out to the Palestinian leadership that despite the fact that Zionists were in control of long distance trade, all government posts were assigned to Muslims and Christians.

The Syrian delegation was also hosted by Mahmoud As-Said A'yan, a leader from Jaffa. They arranged for a general meeting on 27 May 1918 in the Assembly Hall of Al-Jam'iyyah Al-Ahliyyah. In this meeting, Jiries Al-Issa, on behalf of this society, welcomed the delegation. Aziz Rida, a Christian leader, after Al-Issa welcomed the Arab leaders, highly valued the role of those leaders in living up to the hope and expectations of the *ummah*. He, in fact, started his statement by praying to the Lord to bless the Arab *ummah* and Great Britain. Issa As-Sifri then spoke wishing the delegation to hold similar meetings in Syria where the delegates would participate in discussing issues of importance to the *ummah*.

⁶ Ibid.

Rafiq Al-Azm replied, expressing his appreciation to the speakers and to the Palestinians in particular. He greatly admired the Palestinians for their unity and solidarity. He also highly valued the Palestinians' respect of tolerance and their discriminate approach to racial or denominational diversity. He urged Palestinians to act in accordance with the need to achieve progress in both commercial and agricultural sectors.

Suleiman Nassif, on the other hand, focused in his statements on the negotiations that the delegation carried out with the British and the Zionist Commission. These negotiations resulted in halting the role of the proprietors of land during the war. They also resulted in the immediate opening of an agrarian ban designed to serve the Palestinian people, partly by facilitating Palestinian commercial exchange with Egypt. The delegation also agreed with both the British and the Zionists to promulgate land laws similar to those land laws of five fadans in Egypt. In brief, he greatly appreciated British Government sympathy with Palestinian Arabs.

Mukhtar As-Suluh also spoke before the participants in the meeting, expressing his gratitude for the outstanding services offered by Arab acting societies. He described the expedition that came out of Al-Hijaz, and more importantly, he informed the participants that they would soon receive the special envoy of Sharif Hussein, whose visit was designed to gather volunteers to aid in that expedition from Al-Hijaz.⁷

Regardless of all the speeches delivered by members of the Syrian delegation, the Palestinian leaders continued to express their strong opposition to Zionism and to negotiations with the Zionists. The British in this respect obviously failed to pressure the Palestinians to conclude an understanding with the Zionists through the visit of this delegation. Consequently, Dr. Weizmann attempted to meet the Arab leadership, such as Prince Faisal, outside Palestine to place pressure on those Palestinian leaders. The British, probably, advised Dr. Weizmann to try such techniques. They understood that Prince Faisal could be the candidate to recognize the Balfour Declaration. For this reason, they probably prepared him to become the Arab who should easily help in carrying out the Zionist policy for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Both the British and the Zionists put pressure on Prince Faisal to reach an understanding with the Zionist leadership. This step aimed at making the Prince accept the Zionist policy for a Zionist homeland in Palestine as an

⁷ Khillih, op. cit., p. 188-190.

established reality. He was to receive in exchange an assurance of British aid to achieve the Arab demands of independence and unity.

Dr. Weizmann attempted to win Prince Faisal's support for his plans. To this end, he held a meeting with the Prince in Al-Aqabah on 4 June 1918. Dr. Weizmann was well prepared for this meeting. Included in his delegation were a number of British officers commanded by Ormesby Gore. These officers were to help Weizmann in moderating the attitudes of the Prince. On this occasion, Prince Faisal pointed out that despite the fact that Palestine could be seen in terms of its international importance for various denominations, it remains an Arab land. He added that Jewish settlement in Palestine should be under an Arab authority. Dr. Weizmann did not comment on this stand, though it could be seen as an antagonistic attitude towards the Zionists' plans.⁸ The Prince's statement, however, also included an acceptance of Jewish settlements in Palestine, even as he spoke of an Arab authority. In other words, his attitude appeared to be encouraging Zionism.

T.E. Lawrence reported to Balfour in late November 1918, probably suggesting that Prince Faisal, in his meeting with Weizmann, did not necessarily mean what he stated. According to the report, Lawrence informed his superiors that Prince Faisal welcomed the Jewish immigration to Palestine, despite the fact that the Arab people strongly opposed it. This report, written by a close friend of Faisal, supported the earlier beliefs held by both Balfour and Sykes. They primarily believed that mutual understanding could be easily accomplished. Prince Faisal also could accept what other Arab leaders might reject. Balfour fully comprehended Prince Faisal's strong desire to have Syria under his rule. He, in exchange for achieving this objective, was ready to abandon Palestine and to exclude it from his rule. Balfour believed that the Prince would rush to get Zionist aid in his bid for rule in Syria, especially when he had just heard of the advantages of working with Zionism. He would necessarily need this aid at the time of his struggle with the French over Syria. The Prince obviously took for granted the Zionist deception that they wanted him to become a king in Syria.

He therefore agreed with the Zionists. Arik Forbes Adam wrote in late 1919 that Prince Faisal and his aides viewed the Zionists as an asset, believing that they would arm them with men and money in the face of French aggression. Needless to point out, some of his followers were

⁸ Bayan Nwihad Al-Hut, *Al-Qiyadat w-Al-Mua'assat As-Siyasiyyah fi Filistin 1917-1948* (The Political Leadership and Institutions in Palestine). Beirut: Mua'ssat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1981, p. 104.

hostile to Zionism. Carson earlier noted that Faisal was just about to reach an understanding with Zionism. It was not that the Zionists were concerned about French occupation of Syria, but in fact, they were interested in having a friendly relationship with the French. The French occupation of Syria, moreover, would be an obstacle in the way of any Arab unity. In contrast, the Zionists were quick to recognize the independence of both Al-Hijaz and Al-Yaman, since such independence would not deter the Zionists from carrying out their plans in Palestine.⁹

Surprisingly, the Arab and Palestinian leaders also showed trust in Prince Faisal's leadership. They primarily approached things from an Arab nationalist scope. Haqqi Al-Azm, after the Syrian Commission in Cairo had sent a telegraph to the British Government expressing resentment for its Zionist policy in Palestine, attempted to make Prince Faisal act in support of the Palestinian people. He asked the Prince, since he was one of the well-known Arab leaders, to protest Palestine's being used for the Zionists as a Jewish homeland. Al-Azm also demanded that Prince Faisal convey a message to his father, Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca and eventual King of the Arab *ummah*, to protest against the Balfour Declaration before both the British and the allies. The Prince did not necessarily comply with Al-Azm's request. It is worth noting that Al-Azm believed that the Sharif and his sons were committed to non-interference with Zionist policy in Palestine.¹⁰

The Palestinian leaders, regardless of the Hashemite stand on the issue of Palestine, were constant in their compliance with their rooted attitude and ideological commitments as Arab nationalists. In 1918, they formed Al-Jam'iyyat Al-Islamiyyah Al-Massahiyyah (the Islamic-Christian Societies). The formation of these societies as active bodies within a national resistance movement reflected the vision of the leadership as being part of a wider nationalist movement destined to accomplish Arab independence and wider Arab unity. The Palestinian Arabs were interested in having Palestine, 'Southern Syria,' as a part of the Arab kingdom that would be established in Damascus. These policies were formed in accordance with the Ottoman laws. The British recognized and treated these societies as representative of the population.

The objective of these societies according to the testimony of the British Executive Officer in Nablus (Bailey) was to project their nationalist ideological commitment and tone. Bailey indicated that the objectives of these societies as had been declared were the achievement of Arab inde-

⁹ Al-Sayigh, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁰ Khillih, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

pendence, the unity of the *ummah*, the defense and preservation of the holy places, while defending Arab rights economically, politically and socially. The societies also stood for the use of peaceful means to guarantee the safety and well being of the *ummah*. In addition to that, the material and spiritual progress of the Arab region was one of the major objectives of these societies.¹¹

In 1918, the Islamic-Christian Society of Jaffa wrote a memo to General Allenby. In this memo, the Society protested the Zionist plans in Palestine. It also presented the Arab demands on the British:

“Palestine is Arab, its language is Arabic, we wish that these would be officially taken into account. Great Britain was the one to rescue us from the Ottoman oppression. We, therefore, do not expect Britain to let us into the claws of Zionism. We beg the British mercy and justice for the preservation of our rights. The British should not decide about Palestine before consulting with the Palestinians.”¹²

The Islamic-Christian Societies also wrote another memo. The memo emphasized the declaration made by Lloyd George and President Wilson concerning the right of self-determination and rule granted for nations under foreign occupation. It also indicated that

“we the Arabs never committed aggression towards others, we never tried to expel some of our citizens from our countries, we however, do not accept that our guests would have political rights in our motherland.”¹³

The memos sent by these societies later on became more precise and clear. The first memo dated 5 November 1919 expressed strong opposition to the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. They sent it to the military ruler in Palestine. The memo stated that the Islamic-Christian Society of Jaffa represented the view of both the Muslims and Christians of the Jaffa metropolitan area. It, therefore, spoke on behalf of both Muslims and Christians. It protested against the idea of transferring Palestine to a Jewish homeland. The memo also included a Palestinian objection to Jewish immigration to Palestine since this immigration would have a devastating effect on the country.

¹¹ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 81.

¹² Akram Z'aitir, *Watha'iq Al-Harakah Al-Wataniyyah Al-Filistiniyyah 1918-1939* (Palestinian National Movement Documents), ed. 1. Beirut: Mua'ssasat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1979, p. 2.

¹³ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 83.

In 1918, Al-Muntada Al-Adabi (the Literary Gathering) was formed in Jerusalem. This muntada could be seen as an extension of the earlier established Muntada in Constantinople by Abdul Karim Al-Khalil.

It is worth noting in this regard that Jamil Al-Husseini, its founder and one of its eldest members, was a friend of Al-Khalil and a co-founder of the earlier Muntada in Constantinople. Most of its members were youth. Among them were Fakhri An-Nashashibi, Hasan Sudqi Ad-Dajani, Yousef Al-Khatib, Fu'ad An-Nashashibi and Saliba Al-Hkury. The goals of this muntada were similar to those of Al-Nadi Al-'Arabi (The Arab Club established by Amin Al-Husseini).

The Muntada and the club both agreed on the goal of achieving Palestinian unity with Syria as well as resisting Zionism. The slogan of the Muntada was "By the name of the Arabs we tie and for the name of the Arabs we die."¹⁴

By 1918, the Palestinians seemed to have become certain about the Zionist plans in Palestine. They therefore expressed strong opposition to the Zionist policy and restructured their resistance movement as an offshoot of the Arab liberation movement. This step was intended to strengthen their resistance, and they called on the British to back off from their Zionist policy. In this year, Palestinian political activities could be viewed as preparatory steps toward widening the scope and varying the means in their struggle for independence.

On 11 January 1919, the A'yan leaders of Nablus sent a memo to the Peace Conference held in Paris. In the memo, they expressed their disapproval of Zionist immigration and settlement. They protested the Zionist ambitions and plans in Palestine. The memo indicated that Palestine must be treated as an integral part of Syria. Its separation from Syria for the purpose of transforming it into a Jewish homeland complied neither with justice nor with the established Palestinian rights. It also would inflict great spiritual and material harm on the indigenous inhabitants of the country. They urged Great Britain to consider the Arab demands and to recognize the Palestinians' established rights in their motherland.¹⁵

Palestine was known as southern Syria and consisted of three major districts, namely Nablus, Akka and Jerusalem. As a means to defend Palestine from Zionist aggression, especially after they learned of the Balfour

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁵ Z'aitir, op. cit., p. 10.

Declaration, the Palestinians decided to hold the First Palestinian Congress. Delegates from different parts of the country traveled to Jerusalem where the first session was held on 27 January 1919.

The conferees in Jerusalem decided first and foremost to express their condemnation of the known Zionist policy, and they vigorously opposed the Balfour Declaration and the promise of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. They were also determined to petition the Peace Conference in Paris in which they decided to present the conferees with all available data about Jews in Palestine. They intended to demonstrate that the Jews were only a minority in terms of numbers, wealth and property. They also strongly recommended that the fate of Palestine should be decided in accordance with the Palestinians' wishes and well being.

The First Palestinian Arab Congress held in Jerusalem resulted in the conferees' adoption of a number of decisions and recommendations. The National Covenant for Palestine approved by the Congress included a total rejection and opposition to the Balfour Declaration, Zionist immigration and the British Mandate. The treatment of Palestine as an inseparable part of Syria and the independence of Palestine within a united Arab commonwealth were key elements in this covenant.¹⁶

Palestine therefore should be called "Southern Syria." The conferees also decided to form a delegation that was supposed to play a role in the newly established Arab reign in Syria under Faisal's authority. Another delegation was to be formed in order to participate in the works of the International Peace Conference in Paris. The Palestinian leaders assigned this delegation the responsibility of presenting both the Arab and Palestinian cases before the conferees in Paris. It had also to present the National Covenant backed with political and historical factual information to the allies.¹⁷

The First Palestinian Arab Congress sent a memo to the Paris Conference, 3 February 1919. The memo included three major statements concerning Palestine:

The first was that Palestine was considered part of Arab Syria. They had never been historically separated. Nationalist, religious, linguistic, moral,

¹⁶ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 95-96.

¹⁷ Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah fi Mukhtalaf Marahilha* (The Palestinian Question and Its Different Stages), ed. 1. Sayda and Beirut: Al-Maktaba Al-Astrih, 1909, p. 35.

economic and geographic ties well defined the relationship between Palestine and Syria.

The second was based on points considered earlier. Palestine, 'Southern Syria,' should be included within the independent Syrian Arab Government. This government necessarily existed within an Arab country and was free from any foreign influence or mandate.

The third statement was that the Arab Government could call for the aid of the Arab ally, Great Britain, whenever necessary. This aid should not inflict any harm on Arab independence and unity, and good and friendly relations with other alliances should be maintained at the same time.¹⁸

The British, as expected, prevented the delegation elected by the First Palestinian Arab Congress from traveling to Paris to participate in the Peace Conference as a representative of Palestine. Moreover, the British deterred the participation of any individual Arab delegate. Their disapproval of the proposal to send Syrian delegates could be viewed as a case in point. In other words, neither Palestine, Syria nor Iraq were represented in the Peace Conference. Prince Faisal, whose nomination to participate in the conference was supported by the United States and Great Britain, primarily represented his father, Sharif Hussein, personally. Neither Prince Faisal nor his colleague Mohammed Rustum could speak on behalf of the Arabs. Despite this fact, the Prince spoke once for almost twenty minutes on 6 February 1919, focusing on the issue of Arab unity. According to him, blood, history, faith and the Arab language bind all Arabs together as one *ummah*. It is worth nothing that the Prince excluded Palestine from the independence that he demanded for the Arab region. He stated that "Palestine should be left aside due to its international character...Its cause should be resolved by all parties concerned."

In his memo to the Paris Conference in January 1919, the Prince stated that the overwhelming majority of the population in Palestine was composed of both Jews and Palestinian Arabs. The Jews obviously were close to the Arabs where the blood ties bound them both together. The Prince added that Arabs and Jews were in agreement on the fundamental issues. The Arabs, however, could not be responsible for balancing the relationship between different denominations, considering the fact that these denominations in Palestine and elsewhere in the region were always in a state of conflict. This state had often created unusual international condi-

¹⁸ Z'aitir, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

tions. According to him, Arabs called on the international community for an intermediary in Palestine until an independent administration was to be established on the basis of the population represented. This administration was supposed to be capable of looking after the welfare of the people.

Prince Faisal clearly committed himself to the British policy in the Middle East. The assurances made by Herbert Samuel and the British pressure put on the Prince led to a declaration, which he sent to Reuters News Service and issued in the *Times* newspaper on 12 December 1918. In this statement, the Prince expressed allegiance to and an inclination toward an Arab-Zionist mutual understanding.

On 3 January 1919, Faisal and Weizmann reached a mutual understanding. They spoke of two different things, the Arab commonwealth and Palestine. The separation of these two issues seemed to exclude Palestine from Arab unity and state. This demarcation between the two also could be seen as a step leading to the acceptance of the Balfour Declaration and the Jewish homeland in Palestine. The third article of the Faisal-Weizmann understanding indicated that

“All preparatory steps were to be considered, and best guarantees were to be offered to the implementation of the British Government declaration, which was issued 2 November 1917. This should be taken into account when formulating a constitution for the government of Palestine. In accordance with the recognition of the Balfour Declaration, the encouragement of Jewish immigration to Palestine becomes no longer important.”

This Faisal-Weizmann Accord manifested Faisal’s commitment to the British policy in the Middle East, a commitment that was also evident in his speech before the Paris Conference in 1919. His adherence to the British Middle Eastern policy and consequent care for the British Zionist policy can be best seen in his letter to Felix Frankfurter, the American Zionist leader.

In this letter, Faisal stated that

“We, the Arabs, particularly the intellectuals, view with great concern the Zionists’ prosperity. We always do our best to assist the Jews, and we wish them a homeland in which their settlement could be welcomed and appreciated.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Al-Hut, op. cit., pp. 105-107.

Prince Faisal clearly was concerned about informing his friend, the Zionist leader, about his accord with Weizmann. In light of this initiative by the Prince, Rothschild, the Zionist leader, had a dinner party in honor of Prince Faisal. During the party the Prince made a statement in which he spoke of the mutual goals of the Arabs and Zionists.

Prince Faisal could not deny the letter or his accord with Weizmann, because the major points in them were highlighted in his speech before the Paris Conference in February 1919. In February 1919, the Prince importantly held talks with Lloyd George and Clemenceau. In these talks, the Prince agreed with the two European officials to exclude Palestine from the Arab commonwealth. Furthermore, their agreement extended to his acceptance of the establishment of a Jewish political entity under British mandate in Palestine.

Prince Faisal's stand with respect to Zionism was in harmony with what Lawrence wrote about him in 1918. In his report, he indicated that Prince Faisal was ready to accept the Zionists' demands if the British would guarantee for him the throne of Syria, otherwise he would adopt the Palestinian cause and resist Zionism.²⁰ In other words, his throne was of great significance to the extent that he had the intention of giving Palestine in exchange for Syria.

Awni Abdul Hadi, an Arab nationalist and a member of the committee that called for holding the Arab Congress in Paris in 1913, was a close friend of Prince Faisal. He was the only one to faithfully defend the Prince. According to him, the team of Arab leaders surrounding the Prince in Paris in 1919 was shocked by the news that the Faisal-Weizmann Accord reached an agreement formulated in English by Lawrence. In an attempt by Faisal to explain the matter, he expressed an understanding of their concern. He further indicated that he agreed on signing this agreement on the condition that Britain would meet the demand that was included in the memo sent to the British Foreign Ministry. In this memo, he demanded the independence of the Arab region in Asia including the area from Alexandretta in the north down to the coast of the Indian Ocean in the south, which obviously included Palestine. He added that before he signed this agreement, he would neither be responsible for the implementation of it, nor would he endorse any changes made in this document.²¹

The Arabs in Palestine were greatly shocked by the news of the Faisal-Weizmann Accord and Faisal's stand on Zionism. It caused them great

²⁰ Al-Sayigh, op. cit., pp. 72-28.

²¹ Awni Abdul Hadi, *Awraq Khassah* (Special Papers). p. 23.

pain and bitterness. They, therefore, wrote to Prince Faisal. The people in Nablus sent a memo to Prince Faisal in Paris dated 23 February 1919 in which they protested the agreement that gave the Jews rights in Palestine. In the memo they indicated that according to *Ash-Sharq Al-Adna* newspaper issue No. 401, 10 January 1919, Prince Faisal made a statement to the correspondent of Reuters. In it he stated that the interests of Jews and Arabs were mutually bound. The new Arab kingdom would receive with cheer the Jews. Palestine and this Jewish state would have a strong friendly relationship with Arab neighboring states. They added that they also knew of another statement made by Prince Faisal in London in which he indicated that the Jews would have the right to settle in Palestine where they would become neighbors to the Arabs. In the English-Zionist Magazine issue No. 9, January 1919, a statement by Faisal appeared indicating that the interests of both Arabs and Jews were harmonious.

This indicated the awareness of the Palestinian Arabs of various political developments in the region and with respect to the Palestinian question worldwide. It also points to the higher literacy and level of education in Palestine, which allowed the Palestinians to keep up with the news. After the people of Nablus had informed Prince Faisal of their knowledge and awareness concerning his political activities in their memo, they reminded him of a number of established facts. For example, Palestine was inhabited by one million people who were historically, geographically, and economically bound to the Syrians, which in their eyes made Palestine an inseparable part of Syria.

The memo added that the Jews did not exceed 60,000 in number and that they possessed only 400 kilometers of the 17,000 total kilometers that made up the land of Palestine. The Jews had neither economic relations and interests nor political, literary or material existence in the region. Therefore, it was thought, they did not have grounds for their claim to total or even partial rights. Palestine, the memo asserted, looked forward only to independence and becoming part of a wider Arab unit. It is needless to point out that the Palestinians sacrificed much in their endeavor to materialize these goals of independence and unity.

The people of Nablus expressed in their memo their mistrust of the news that they had received about the Prince's activities. In addition, they declared that they could not but protest each and every treaty, admission, and contract or promise that would grant Jews the rights of immigration, settlement and citizenship in Palestine. Finally, they urged the Prince to

support them in their struggle to achieve independence and to keep Palestine as part of independent Syria.²²

The Palestinian's concern with the issue of an independent Palestine might have made them keep track of the decisions and measures adopted by the Peace Conference in 1919. They then could have a great awareness of what Prince Faisal had done. They also could do their best to push forward in utilizing those decisions to better ends. The extensive hours spent by participants in the conference produced no decisions concerning Palestine. This bored the Palestinians, and instead of waiting for decisions to be made at the conference, they decided to persistently demand independence for Palestine.

On 24 March 1919, Al-Jam'iyyat Al-Islamiyyah Al-Massahiyyah (the Islamic-Christian Society) in Jerusalem sent a memo to the ambassadors of various countries and to the High British Military Command. In this memo, the society asserted that since the great powers had decided to offer the colonized people around the world the right to self-determination and the right to choose their own authorities, the society, on behalf of all Palestinian people, demanded an independent constitutional government for Palestine. This government would be independent internally and would be formed on the basis of the people's choice by way of elections. It would legislate in accordance with the wishes and well being of Palestinians. At the same time, it would be politically connected with the independent Arab Syria. And according to this plan, the Jewish immigration to Palestine should be totally prohibited.²³

The international commission, known as King-Crane, visited Palestine in mid-1919. Britain and France - for colonial reasons - abstained from participating in the committee, which therefore was formed by US President Wilson who appointed the two Americans, Henry King and Charles Crane. A week before the arrival of the King-Crane Commission to Palestine, the Islamic-Christian Society in Jerusalem issued a bulletin in which the demands and ideas decided upon were listed and submitted before the committee. In this bulletin, the society asserted that Syria should be united, and that Palestine should be an integral part of Syria. With respect to Zionism, the Society distinguished between Palestinian Jewry and the Jewry of the Diaspora immigrating to Palestine. The bulletin stated,

“We totally reject the transference of Palestine to a Jewish homeland. We do not allow for any Jew to immigrate to our country. We also

²² Z'aitir op. cit., p. 18.

²³ Ibid., p. 22.

strongly protest against Zionism. With regard to local Jewry who inhabited Palestine earlier, they should be considered full citizens and enjoy rights that are similar to those of Palestinian Arabs.”

The King-Crane Commission arrived on 19 June and began its survey of the views of the people. Out of 260 petitions that it received, 222 diligently opposed to Zionism and its program.²⁴

On 3 July, the Syrian Congress was held. A number of decisions were made, they were supposed to be delivered before the King-Crane Commission. First, they demanded the total independence of Syria. It was not to fall under the protection of any foreign country.

A critical point addressed at the Congress entailed a complete objection to the Zionist demand to transform Southern Syria, Palestine, into a Jewish homeland. Jewish immigration, they said, would bring great damage to the people in terms of the economy, nationalism, and political existence. The Palestinian Jewry and Arabs, however, were even in terms of rights and duties.

Another point stressed the demand that neither Palestine nor Lebanon should be isolated from Greater Syria. The unity of the country “should be preserved.”²⁵

The King-Crane Commission wrote its report in which it highlighted the major concerns and demands listed by both the Palestinians and the Syrians. The Palestinians at the same time assessed the work of the committee as having fallen short of delivering concrete results.

On 20 August 1919, the Islamic-Christian Society in Jerusalem sent a memo to the military high command in Jerusalem condemning the separation of Palestine from Greater Syria. The power that would be handed a mandate over Syria and Palestine should assist in their independence, and it would not allow for the transfer of Palestine to a Jewish homeland. The memo also asserted that the Palestinians as a whole would not accept the Zionist project in their country, and they would strongly defend their motherland against Zionist aggression.²⁶

Unrest was widely spread in the Arab region in the years 1919 and 1920. This state of unrest and discontent with the European powers and the call

²⁴ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

²⁵ Z'aitir, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

²⁶ Khillih, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

for granting independence to the Arab World resulted in a national uprising.

On 27 February 1920, an Arab political demonstration took place in Jerusalem before the eyes of the British. It came in protest of Zionist immigration and settlement. In another demonstration, which occurred on 8 March, the demonstrators were in a state of high uproar due to the crowning of Faisal, king of Syria and Palestine. The speeches that were delivered were highly political and fiery, and the demonstration ended in a fight between Palestinians and Jews in which rocks were thrown. A number of Jews were hurt before the police finally succeeded in controlling the scene.

A further incident mirrored the state of the Palestinians' disaffection. On 1 March, two Palestinian gangs launched armed attacks on two Jewish settlements in the Metalih and Tal-Hay. These attacks might have been planned and carried out by Palestinians residing in Syria. In this incident, Captain Joseph Trumpeldor, a well-known Zionist officer, and six other Jews were killed. The accumulation of these incidents could be viewed as an introductory step to the breakout of a wider national uprising.

Both the British and the Zionists seem to have foreseen what the boiling situation in Palestine might result in. The Zionists, therefore, pressured the British High Command in Palestine to outlaw the demonstration and rioting on 11 March. The Passover ceremonies of the Jews, the Easter celebrations of the Christians as well as the celebrations of the Muslims on the occasion of An-Nabi Musa coincidentally came at the same time in 1920. On these occasions Muslim visitors from other villages and towns would gather. The British Government, therefore, provided not only the troops necessary to maintain order, but also musicians to participate in the occasion.

In this climate of unrest and bitterness, the Arab leadership in Palestine, not surprisingly, utilized every gathering and occasion to protest against Zionism and Britain. On 4 April, the people arriving from Hebron and other places were to wait and listen to fiery speeches delivered by Arif Al-Arif, Musa Kazim Al-Husseini and Amin Al-Husseini and others. The excitement surrounding those speeches, according to the Baleen Committee, reached its peak when a picture of Prince Faisal as king of Syria and Palestine was raised.

At this moment, the masses reached the highest point of the uproar. According to Izzat Darwazih, they shouted slogans directed against the Zionists and the British. Issa Ash-Shifri reported that the Christian Pales-

tinians participated in the celebration. They called for independence and unity and an opposition to Jewish immigration and settlement.

The heated incidents of the 1920 national uprising were stoked by provocative acts of Zionists near Jaffa Gate. In the midst of stone throwing, some Zionists took up arms against Arab rioters. These incidents lasted from the 4 through 10 April 1920 despite the British imposition of martial law.²⁷

The uprising culminated three years of Palestinian calls for independence; independence for the Arab World and for Palestinians. Out of patience with the British and their promises, the Palestinians were obliged to resist Zionist aggression on their own. Further, the international community of the peace conference and the Arab nationalist movement represented by Prince Faisal did not assist them in their struggle for an independent Palestine. Self-reliance, therefore, remained the only alternative in their bid for liberation.

THWARTED ARABISM AND THE POLITICS OF COLLABORATIONISM

The Palestinians might have proven their capability in the struggle with Zionism if their uprising in 1920 had carried with it an ultimatum to the British. By doing so, the British might have felt that the development of the Zionist policy in Palestine would not be easily achieved. Despite the messages presented by the 1920 national uprising, the British, along with the French, completed their negotiations and discussions at the San Remo Peace Conference of April 1920. They were in the process of formulating the final settlement to divide the region between the two parties on the basis of the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement (with some revisions).

After the 1920 uprising, the British implemented a number of measures that showed the extent of unconditional commitment they maintained to the Zionist policy. For example, they prohibited the Palestinian leadership from holding the Second Palestinian Arab Congress. Not only did the British want to maintain control over the ideologies of the Palestinian leadership, but they also might have been concerned about further violence.

The peace conference also included the formulation of the mandate system in Palestine, which included as an essential part the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

²⁷ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-123.

In 1920, Herbert Samuel was appointed as British High Commissioner in Palestine. Samuel was clearly interested in establishing a Jewish homeland through winning the support of the Palestinian Arabs, which explains his initiative to meet with the Palestinian leadership in an attempt to create a Zionist-Arab mutual understanding.

Samuel's appointment as was received with anger by the Palestinian masses. They knew that his main goal was to establish a Jewish homeland. The opposition to Samuel's appointment, however, did not succeed in preventing it, nor did it deter some leaders from welcoming him once the appointment took place.

On 30 June 1920, Samuel arrived in Jaffa, where Qasem As-Said made a statement in which he welcomed the arrival of the new High Commissioner, saying that the country was in great need of a high commissioner with the ability to resolve its problems. He added that he hoped happiness would prevail in Jaffa and in the entire country under the British rule.

The afternoon of the same day of his arrival, the High Commissioner arrived in Jerusalem, where he was welcomed by the mayor, Ragheb An-Nashashibi. An-Nashashibi told Samuel,

“Jerusalem welcomes your arrival, the High Commissioner whom His Majesty the King of Great Britain has delegated. You act on behalf of the greatest king on earth in order to bring happiness to the inhabitants and to pave for them the roads to progress and success. You are to maintain justice by being indiscriminate between the inhabitants of the country. These are the main objectives of the British Government in all countries. We are confident of receiving support of Great Britain – the motherland of liberty and peace.”

On 3 and 4 June, Storrs and Stanton issued an announcement of meetings which were to be held the following month. They called on the people of the south to meet in Jerusalem on 7 July and the people of the north to meet in Haifa on 8 July. In response, the Palestinian national leadership called for a boycott of the two meetings.²⁸

In fact, the Palestinians used all available means to resist Zionist attempts to push forward the Zionist idea. Their reliance on both themselves and the Arab Government in Syria should have strengthened their position

²⁸ Khillih, op. cit., p. 243.

regarding Zionism. The summer of 1920, however, witnessed the decline of the Syrian Arab Government after the defeat of the Syrian troops in the battlefield in July. This decline had a serious impact on the Palestinian national movement, starting with the Third Palestinian Arab Congress held between 13-19 December 1920.

The Congress, which was held in Haifa, was convened as a result of a suggestion by Suleiman At-Taji and Musa Kazim Al-Husseini, the head of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress, who chaired the conference. On 18 December, the conference reported to Herbert Samuel the main demands of the Palestinian people. In this report, the Palestinian leaders called for the formation of an elected Palestinian national government, whose policies and political performance should be watched over by a parliament elected by Arabic-speaking people living in Palestine, especially those inhabiting the country prior to World War I. They also emphasized the people's position regarding the British administration in Palestine, since the administration was in contradiction to the Palestinians' wishes and rights.

They also sent a telegraph to the British Prime Minister, in which they harshly criticized the appointed consultative council. It enacted measures and regulations, though its members neither represented nor were elected by the Palestinian people. In this telegraph, they finally demanded a national government and an elected legislative council.

The conference elected an Executive Committee and gave the chairmanship to Musa Kazim Al-Husseini. This committee was supposed to follow up and monitor the implementation and progress of the decisions adopted by the conference.

Although the decisions made during the conference clearly showed a strong stand against Zionism, they could be seen as moderate in terms of their approach to the British. The three major articles adopted by the conference did not specify the scope and nature of the British mandate authorities. They, meanwhile, strongly opposed the inclusion of the Balfour Declaration within the mandate system for Palestine.²⁹

This Congress was held by the Islamic-Christian Societies. These societies, dating back to 1918, came as an extension of the Arab nationalist societies in the region. Its members were descended from the Al-A'yan family, merchants and landowners in cities and villages, in addition to

²⁹ Khillih, *op. cit.*, p. 242.

some middle-class intellectuals. The absence of the call for Palestinian independence with an independent united Syria did not necessarily represent a change in the ideological commitments of the conference, however. It rather resulted from the removal of Faisal's rule by the French and the French occupation of Syria.

Regardless of the nature of the decisions made by the Palestine Arab Congress in Haifa, the young and radical members in the national movement harshly criticized these decisions. Issa Al-Issa wrote an article in which he pointed out that the demands that the conference in Haifa called for were not sufficiently radical.³⁰

The end of the Arab Government in Syria by the French did not just trouble the Palestinians, but rather came as a major setback to the Hashemite leadership of the Arab liberation movement. They looked upon Faisal's rule in Syria as part of an established right. The French, by occupying Syria, acted in an antagonistic way. This could only have aggravated the situation already present since the British broke their promises to the Arabs.

Prince Abdullah, the other son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca received the news of the French removal of Arab rule in Syria with anger and resentment. He responded to the news by leading a number of his followers to Syria in an attempt to regain the Arab rule there. According to his account, he seemed however to have been interested mainly in making contact with the British. There he could comprehend the situation.

Upon his arrival in Transjordan, the British called on Prince Abdullah to visit Jerusalem where he could meet with British officials for the purpose of discussing the matter. The Prince agreed with Winston Churchill to become the Prince of the Emirate of Transjordan. Under British Mandate, he was supposed to receive instructions from the British High Commissioner of Jerusalem, though Transjordan was not included within the British Mandate for Palestine.

In their meeting, Churchill instructed the Prince that he should neither allow an individual nor a group or a party to attack Syria through its borders with Transjordan, of which he would be the temporary ruler. France, Churchill re-emphasized, was still a British ally, and the boundaries of its sphere of influence must be protected. He characterized Prince Abdullah at that time as being temporary because, for him, approval from the British Government for the policy of the Prince's rule should be at-

³⁰ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

tained. In addition, he needed the support of the population for his policy, and this according to Churchill would require six months to accomplish.

In response, Prince Abdullah declared his full commitment to act in accordance with the British policy in the region. The reasons behind his commitment, according to him, were two: First, Sharif Hussein of Mecca and his sons fought the war against the Turks in an alliance with the British. As individuals or together, they were determined not to act in a contradictory manner to British policy. Second, his competition with his brother Prince Faisal over the throne of Iraq would be, according to him, unreasonable, even if he had believed that he would have been more compatible to the throne than his brother.

Prince Faisal also received with pleasure and enthusiasm the offer that he would be enthroned in Iraq. With respect to the throne of Iraq, Prince Faisal indicated to Awni Abdul Hadi that he could not turn down the offer of the throne of Iraq. In a sense he could not abandon Iraq at a time when the country was in need of leadership. He could not also reject the throne, because the British would offer it to others who had long waited for such an offer. In consequence, the Hashemites would lose the leadership in the Arab region to which they had devoted themselves for such a long time.

In the Prince's final analysis, according to Awni Abdul Hadi, politics could not be the determination by the politician to accomplish all things to which he committed himself, but it had rather to be the realization of the possible. For him, the politician is not necessarily the one who knows what he wants, but rather the one who recognizes his limitations and acts in accordance with them. Prince Faisal, in this regard, expressed his convictions in the policy of take and demand. In other words, the politician should be flexible.³¹

The Prince decided to employ this policy with the British in Iraq as he learned a lesson from the experience of Syria, where the Syrians, he suggested, lost everything because they insisted on achieving the whole thing. The Syrians demanded the independence for the whole of Greater Syria including Palestine, though insistence on this demand was incompatible with Arab capabilities. In addition to living up to its commitment toward the French, the British Government, through arrangements with the two princes, intended to achieve a number of objectives.

³¹ Abdul Hadi, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-54.

First, by appointing Prince Abdullah in Transjordan and enthroning his brother Faisal in Iraq, the British successfully contained the Hashemite leadership of the Arab movement, which would greatly aid them in carrying out their Middle East policy.

Second, by installing these appointees and by imposing certain formations in both Transjordan and Iraq, they could successfully bypass the Arab call for an Arab commonwealth. Thereby the political fragmentation of the Arab region, which immensely confounded British interest, would become defeated.

Third, the British seemed to have succeeded in having an open area for their influence from the Mediterranean to the Gulf. This area would act as a buffer zone deterring possible French attempts to reach the Gulf area.

Fourth, the British seemed to have planned for having those imposed states in Transjordan and Iraq in preparation for receiving great numbers of Palestinians who would seek refuge under the British and Zionist pressure to realize the Zionist idea.

In any case, Winston Churchill's visit to Palestine in the period 28 to 30 March 1921 caused the Palestinians bitterness and discomfort. A delegation representing the Palestinians met Churchill during his visit. Among those were the representatives of Haifa who presented the British officials with a memo. In this memo, they rejected the British Mandate unless the British would meet the demands of the Palestinian Arabs. The Arabs added that they neither hated the Turks nor favored the British for racial reasons, but rather they did so because of their love of independence and liberty. They hoped that the British would assist them in attaining their role. The British, they argued, were no longer as they had been. If the British were not ready to aid the Arabs in their struggle for independence, other powers would be more than willing to offer the needed help.

On Monday, 30 March 1921, the people of Jaffa woke up to witness a strike. Everything in the city was affected by the atmosphere created by the protesting masses. The Islamic-Christian Society decided to call for peaceful demonstrations starting at 11 a.m. They, on the one hand, intended to protest against the Balfour Declaration, and on the other, to show their support to the Congress and its decisions. Moreover, this decision came along with the commitment to show other Palestinian cities the call for peaceful demonstrations. The government ordered the society to cancel the demonstrations. Instead, the people could submit their complaints and protests to Churchill, who would happily receive and study them. In response, those demonstrations were stopped. The masses, in an

attempt to express their anger and resentment, closed down their shops and stores.³²

The Arabs' discomfort with Churchill's visit can be understood, considering his insistence on viewing the British/Zionist agenda as an established one which he could do nothing to change, and the Palestinians should learn how to live with it. Some felt discontented with the visit for other reasons. Prince Abdullah, for example, was unhappy with the visit because he wished to be enthroned as king of both Palestine and Transjordan. To his surprise, however, he discovered in his discussions with Churchill that the attainment of his wish was nearly impossible.³³

The political atmosphere in Palestine during the months of April and May became very clouded. The death of the Mufti brought to the political arena the rivalry of two major contenders, Amin Al-Husseini and Ragheb An-Nashashibi to fill this vacated post. The Jaffa incident following the Labor Day demonstration on 1 March 1921 and the role of the Palestinian leadership in the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress as mediators between the government and the Palestinian masses discredited this leadership. Further discredit to the leadership resulted from their lack of commitment to the Palestinians in the May 1921 boycott of British and Zionist goods. The leadership therefore badly needed to do something that would rescue it from total decline. It seemed to have been influenced by the atmosphere that Prince Abdullah's and Churchill's meeting created. Therefore, they might have become increasingly interested in utilizing a policy of collaboration with the British as a means to achieve independence and liberty.

The reason behind holding the Fourth Palestinian Arab Congress in the period 29 May to 4 June 1921, the author Al-Hut asserted, lay in the newly emerging political atmosphere. The mandate system for Palestine would be put before the British Parliament for authorization. She stated, "Our situation demands opinions. It also necessitates sending the delegation quickly to Europe. We also should do everything necessary."³⁴

At the time of the Fourth Palestinian Arab Congress, *Filistin* newspaper reported that each and every individual in Palestine acknowledged the need to send a delegation that would represent the Palestinian people in Europe. This delegation should defend the just Palestinian cause. It also should act diligently to achieve Palestinian rights. The Palestinians became

³² *Filistin*, Jaffa, 30 March 1921.

³³ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 146.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

aware of the need for such rights after the Jaffa incident. The Executive Committee of the Third Palestinian Arab Congress called on the Palestinian leaders, A'yan and the principle leaders of the National movement to attend the Fourth Congress, which was held in Jerusalem. The principal attendees of this Congress were 82 leaders. They presented their election papers, which were authorized by thousands of people. They elected Musa Kazim as a chairman and Arif Ad-Dajani as Vice Chairman. The conferees held nine rounds of discussions day and night.³⁵

The decision to form the first delegation to be sent to Europe came on 2 June 1921. Musa Kazim Al-Husseini was chosen to head the delegation. The membership of the delegation included Tawfiq Hammad, Ibrahim Shamas, Shibli Al-Jamal, Ayman At-Tamimi and Mu'in Al-Madi. On this occasion, Al-Husseini, on behalf of the delegation, gave a speech. In it, the delegation, he asserted, assured both the Palestinians and the Arab *ummah* that its members and chairman would do their best to act in accordance with their commitment to achieve independence and liberty and to preserve the rights of the Palestinian people.³⁶

On 12 August, the delegation submitted its first memo to the British Government. In the memo, the delegation demanded the formation of a national government, whose acts would be monitored and approved by parliament. The members, the memo stated, should be elected by the inhabitants of Palestine (Muslims, Christians and Jews) who had been there prior to World War I. They also called for the British to cancel the Zionist idea of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Jewish immigration should be halted until a national government in Palestine was formed. All laws and jurisdictions enacted by the British after the occupation should be terminated.

The British cabinet approved of neither the letter nor the spirit of the memo. This rejection became public on 18 August 1921. The following day the parliament session was over. Some members of the Palestinian delegation traveled to Geneva to join the Syrian delegation. Both delegations intended to form what was known as the Executive Committee of the Palestinian-Syrian Joint Congress.³⁷

The Palestinian delegation clearly presented itself and the Palestinian demands in a diligent manner. The strength of its position at that time could be attributed to three main factors. First, the delegation could feel free to

³⁵ *Filistin*, Wednesday, 8 June 1921.

³⁶ Khillih, op. cit., p. 267.

³⁷ Khillih, op. cit., p. 271.

do what was best to defend the nation and its natural, economic and political rights. The delegation however should not decide on major and vital issues until these issues received the approval of the Palestinian masses. Second, Herbert Samuel's attempt to form another delegation in order to weaken the position of the Palestinian representative in London failed. The 29 members of the Islamic Christian Committee whom Samuel invited to discuss the proposed constitution refused to play to the hand of the commissioner, and they declared that any decision should be subject to the approval of the elected Palestinian representatives in London.

Third, the rise of armed organizations espousing the use of force to put an end to Jewish immigration to Palestine constituted an asset and a support for those representatives negotiating in London. During August and September 1921, a number of meetings in Tulkarem, Hebron, Ramallah, and Lubyah were held. The participants in these meetings were both from the urban and rural sides. These meetings came as a great opportunity for urban political leadership to coordinate its work with those political activities in the countryside.³⁸

The reason behind these meetings seemed to have been the people's assessment that the delegation was unable to deliver on its commitments through the negotiating effort in London. They also should have well recognized the fact that they could not at that time face the well-equipped British troops. They, therefore, seem to have decided to use guerilla warfare and violence as a means of putting an end to Jewish immigration to Palestine.³⁹

The Palestinian attempts to resolve their problem seemed to have been harshly criticized by the Arabs. This criticism centered on the issue of the Palestinians pushing their question to the front burner before other Arab matters. Issa Al-Issa, the owner of *Filistin*, wrote:

“The great emphasis on the Palestinian cause is on the horizon because they were Palestinians first. And secondly, they do not like to have foreigners sharing their land. When a fire breaks out in a home, its owners would exclusively act just in accordance with putting the fire out.”⁴⁰

The threat of Zionism to Palestine must have been for those insightful Syrians a huge threat to neighboring counties like Syria. Deterring this

³⁸ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 151.

³⁹ Kayyali, op. cit., pp. 154-156.

⁴⁰ *Filistin*, Saturday, 3 September 1921.

threat leads to the presentation of other surrounding Arab countries. It was thought they should aid the Palestinians in their fight against the Zionists.

Criticism of the Palestinian leadership came from the Hashemite leadership. This might be discerned from the article of Al-Issa, who indicated that the Palestinians were Palestinians first and Arabs second. Whenever they put the fire out in their own house, the Palestinians would pay attention to the other Arab causes like the Syrian one, unless they had doubts or suspicions about the Arab national leaders. He also stated,

“Those who demanded from us the contrary to what we are doing now, also accused us. They, with bad intention, accused us of what they had been accustomed to doing themselves and been well-known for doing. We say once and for all in this respect that our opinion could not be contained.”⁴¹

The Palestinians in the latter part of 1921 seem to be still concerned with the issues of Arabism and Arab unity and commonwealth. They seem to blame the Hashemites for their failure to deliver on their commitments as leaders of the Arab liberation movement. In an article in *Filistin* dated 22 October 1921, the author pointed out that the Arab leadership still shouldered the whole responsibility for building an Arab nation and state. Those leaders, by confronting Zionism, could defer the danger that would threaten their countries. There they could serve the Arab goals and establish the solid base for Arab unity and commonwealth. The author also criticized those leaders who present the state formation in Iraq as an achievement. In his words

“we know that the new monarchy in Iraq was established neither as a fulfillment of a promise nor as an implementation to an agreement. Its formation was not an outcome of the Iraqi established right, but rather it embodied the vital interest of the British.”⁴²

Although some Palestinian leaders were harsh critics of the Hashemites for declining to meet their commitments in terms of Arab unity and state, the Islamic-Christian Society in Jaffa acted not as a leading organization of the Palestinian masses but rather as an elite. The leaders of this society, due to their elitist approach, presented themselves as mediators between the government of Palestine and the masses. The developments that came

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² *Filistin*, Saturday, 22 October 1921.

along with the Balfour declaration anniversary on 2 November 1917 was a case in point.

On 24 November 1921, the Palestine committee in Cairo issued a call on the Palestinians to go on strike. They were supposed to express their opposition to and condemnation of the Balfour Declaration on its anniversary. In response, great numbers of Palestinians acted in accordance with this call and went on strike. The British Government, according to the Islamic-Christian Society, considered this work as a possible source of misunderstanding, misconduct, and the disruption of commercial and economic life. The government, therefore, called for halting these activities on that day. It also negotiated the matter with the leaders of the society and some A'yans in Jaffa, where they reached an agreement.

The Islamic-Christian Society, therefore, advised all the Palestinians not to close stores or go on strike. The society instead would fulfill the duty of sending telegraphs of protests and condemnation of the Balfour Declaration on that day.⁴³

The Islamic-Christian Society in Jaffa surprisingly decided to go along with the British policy in Palestine when the general sentiment among the Palestinian intellectuals at that time became increasingly anti-British. Those intellectuals gradually and steadily began to comprehend the British relationship with the Zionists.

In an article entitled "Aqidaatuna As-Siyasiyyah Fil-Qadiyyah" issued in *Filistin* on 23 November 1921, the author (probably Issa Al-Issa) pointed out that the Palestinians, as everybody knew, were not in favor of the British Mandate. They did not necessarily credit the British for 'remarkable administration' and 'great service' to the colonized people. The Palestinians opposed the British because of their racist outlook, in addition to the fact that they adopted the policy of Balfour and the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.⁴⁴

Another article in *Filistin* by Al-Issa could be used as support for the earlier stated premise concerning the growth of Palestinian awareness of the British alliance with Zionism. In the article it was stated that they always believed in what the British had constantly stated. The latest had been Churchill, who had stated that the success of Zionism wholly depended on their efforts themselves. "We, however, question the success of these efforts," stated Al-Issa. "Now Mr. Churchill would say that the British

⁴³ *Filistin*, Wednesday 2 November 1921.

⁴⁴ *Filistin*, Wednesday, 23 November 1921.

Government came to the scene and it added its effort to that of the Zionist immigration societies.”⁴⁵

The Palestinians were put under pressure and were heavily burdened by the British commitments to the Zionists, especially at the time when the leadership of the Palestinian national movement fervently believed in collaboration with the British as a means to attain liberty and independence. Moreover, the Zionists attempted to put them on the defensive. They aimed at creating tension within the national movement itself. By late 1921, the Zionists initiated the formation of the National Islamic Societies.

In an article appearing in *Filistin*, the author harshly criticized the National Islamic Societies. He did not necessarily criticize individuals but rather the fact that those societies were the creation of Zionism. This fact frightened the Palestinians, though they credited their enemy for the ability to manipulate the circumstances. Those persons who collaborated with the Zionists would not succeed in causing trouble to the Palestinian national effort. The Zionists behind the formation of those societies had two objectives: first, they intended to delude the Westerners that Palestinians were not all together active against Zionism but rather a group of them were moderate and ready to collaborate with Zionists. Secondly, one could discern from the name of these societies that they were Islamic and that the Zionists were planning to create a deep rift between Muslims and Christians in Palestine. There, they could succeed in removing the front. The Muslim-Christian unity stood in their way of achieving their goal. The author reemphasized the fact that the Muslim-Christian ties in Palestine were stronger than ever before. The Zionists’ plans and games were also unsuccessful. They could no longer deceive the others.⁴⁶

The Palestinians’ awareness of the British and Zionist plans and goals may explain their vehement rejection of all measures and policies initiated by the High Commissioner Herbert Samuel. Their increasing awareness of the British rule in Palestine seemed to become more evident in early summer 1922. According to an article published in *Filistin* in June 1922, the Palestinians had even rejected what had been constantly stated, that not just the Zionists but also, and more particularly, the British were the enemies of the Palestinians. This rejection came as a result of the belief that Britain reached the point of greatness and power due to its acting in accordance with the basis of justice and liberty all over the world. The British Zionist policy and their support of a Jewish homeland in Palestine

⁴⁵ *Filistin*, Saturday 26 November 1921.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

had clearly shaken this belief. The British, on the contrary, built a great nation at the expense of weak communities.⁴⁷

This stand on the British policy and interests seemed to have been missing in June 1921 when the Fourth Palestinian Arab Congress decided on sending a delegation headed by Musa Kazim to London. This delegation contacted the British Government and parliament and toured some parts of Europe in August 1922. It returned to Palestine where those leaders were warmly welcomed by the masses.

On 20 August 1922, the Fifth Palestinian Arab Congress was held in Nablus. This Congress convened in the midst of a number of disastrous developments. The main disaster was Churchill's White Paper, the approval of the mandate system for Palestine by the League of Nations, and the incorporation of the Balfour Declaration in the mandate system. The number of attendees, estimated at 106, exceeded all expectations. This Congress viewed the mandate system for Palestine as the opening of an era of national struggle for that country. The participants who represented various parts of the country committed themselves under the oath:

“We the representatives in the Fifth Palestinian Arab Congress, held in Nablus, commit ourselves, God, history, and the nation to continue working in order to achieve the independence of our motherland and the unity of the *ummah* by all legitimate means. We will accept neither the Jewish homeland nor Zionist immigration.”⁴⁸

Among the issues that the conferees occupied themselves with was an assessment of the tour of the Islamic delegation headed by Abdul Qadir Al-Muzaffar in Islamic countries. This delegation visited Egypt, Sudan and Al-Hijaz in July. The visit to Al-Hijaz coincided with the Hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage. The delegation, therefore, succeeded in carrying out a program aimed at raising the awareness of Muslims from different Islamic countries of the Palestinian cause. They presented to the pilgrims a picture illuminating the situation in Palestine and the latest developments with regard to the Palestinian cause. Consequently, a great number of telegraphs carrying the names of the pilgrims were sent to the League of Nations. These telegraphs contained Muslim protests against the British mandate in Palestine.

⁴⁷ *Filistin*, Tuesday 1922, issue No. 489.

⁴⁸ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 163.

These telegraphs obviously had limited impact on the world's attitude towards the Palestinian question, because the Arab and Islamic nations had little or no influence on the international scene. Despite this fact, the delegation successfully achieved the goal of establishing an Islamic link as a means to defeat the political existence of the Arab Islamic nations. The embryonic formation of this link came in Mecca. While the delegation was in Al-Hijaz, an Executive Committee was formed upon the delegation's visit to Sudan. Jam'iyyat At-Tadamun Al-Islamiyyah (The Islamic Solidarity Association) was also established.⁴⁹

In early 1923, the Palestinian delegation tried again to negotiate a settlement with the British. On 11 January, the Palestinian negotiators did not openly demand a total independence for Palestine. What they did demanded was the formation of a national government representative of all inhabitants, the duty of which was the internal administration of the country including the immigration issue. The constitution of Palestine also should approve an elected representative council. Relations with the British meanwhile should be determined later, based on an agreement between Britain and the local government. The successor of Churchill in the ministerial post listened carefully to the delegation and decided to follow the footsteps of his predecessor. This brought the negotiations to a halt.

Upon the delegation's return to the country it was announced to the people that the negotiations with the British had failed. In fact, Sharif Hussein of Mecca at that time rejected the British Arab treaty as long as it did not include Palestine as an integral part. The British offered him two choices. Palestine could be included in the treaty, with the terms of the Balfour Declaration including the condition that it did not entail the establishment of a Jewish homeland in the whole of Palestine. Or, Palestine could be excluded from the treaty, and the Arab union would be comprised of Iraq, Transjordan and Al-Hijaz. Sharif Hussein rejected these choices and proposed the formation of a constitutional government in Palestine. At the time of the negotiations, the Wahabi troops attacked Al-Hijaz and conquered Mecca and At-Ta'if.⁵⁰

In response to these developments in Al-Hijaz, Awni Abdul Hadi visited Amman in early 1923. He intended to participate in the preparation of the conference that would be held in Amman. This conference was to unite those leaders in the Arabian Peninsula. As-Suluh (the Lebanese leader) in

⁴⁹ Ibid. p. 164.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 173.

a letter to Abdul Hadi, dated 3 January 1923, hoped that his visit to Amman would be fruitful.⁵¹

The involvement of the Palestinian leadership in Arab internal conflicts did not halt their preoccupation with Palestinian matters. The ceremonies and celebration of An-Nabi Musa Festival were getting close in 1923. It was supposed to be an opportunity for the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress to put pressure on the British Government and to demonstrate strength in the face of the British. It, instead, took all necessary measures and regulations that could guarantee control over the masses and their celebrations.

Jamal Hussein told Dedus, the civil secretary, in a private meeting which took place in March 1923, the Palestinians could follow either one of two ways to obtain liberty and independence. They could either use constitutional means, or they could use revolution. Needless to point out that the former was more favored, though the latter could aid the Palestinians in obtaining their rights completely.⁵² Indeed Hussein did not necessarily express a personal stand but rather a perception held by the Palestinian leadership in the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress.

In April 1923, Jamal Hussein had another private meeting with the British official. In the meeting he indicated that the Executive Committee was under severe pressure put on the committee by several groups and organizations. They were applying pressure in order to hold a new Palestinian Arab Congress. This Congress was supposed to decide on the stand that all people would adopt in dealing with the government. In addition, a great segment of the society was in favor of tax evasion. In their view, tax evasion was the next step to be utilized, instead of sending more calls, on the British Government to ease the condition and to put an end to its Zionist policy in Palestine. He himself did not favor this stand, but rather supported the idea of petitioning the government.

In the period 16 to 20 June 1923, the Sixth Palestinian Arab Congress was held in Jaffa. It was chaired by Musa Kazim Hussein. In this Congress the participants rejected the Anglo-Arab treaty. They also decided to form a delegation headed again by Musa Kazim Hussein. This delegation was supposed to depart immediately for London. The delegation members were to communicate with the parliamentarians and the people at the Ministry of Overseas Colonies before a final authorization of the treaty was to be carried out.

⁵¹ Abdul Hadi, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁵² Khillih, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

Tax evasion and the boycott of the government's works were also burning issues. Jamal Husseini was the one to bring up this crucial issue, which occupied public opinion in Palestine. He, in a speech, defended the policy of tax evasion. He factually backed his defense. He supported his call for the evasion of taxes by arguing that the government collected taxes and distributed the money of taxpayers to Zionist associations and immigrants. The government, he continued, under Zionist pressure did not grant the Palestinian cultivators the needed loan for their work in agriculture. This, in Husseini's view, would have a devastating result on the economic life of the Palestinian peasants, not to ignore that the High Commissioner granted land for the Jewish without consulting with Palestinian Arabs. He finally suggested that the issue of tax evasion should be considered by the economic committee. This committee should consider that there should be no taxation without representation.

The economic committee could not decide. It therefore, called upon the Executive Committee to take charge and decide. This issue faced huge opposition in the meeting. The argument was that carrying out tax evasion and boycotting government works could come only as part of staging a revolution. It would be difficult for a country like Palestine with limited economic and financial resources to carry out a successful revolution against the British. The report by the governor of Nablus district best explained the reasons behind the opposition to the policy of tax evasion. The mayor assured him before holding the Congress that the conferees would not decide on stopping payment of taxes to the government. The governor added also that he was told that Al-Haj said Ash-Shawwa vehemently opposed any policy of tax evasion that the Congress would adopt. As a large landowner, he would be severely harmed by measures that the government would carry out in response to the policy of tax evasion.

The Palestinian delegation departed on 15 July, stimulated by the news from England that an official committee was formed. Its main duty was to study the Palestinian cause. This ministerial committee refused to meet the delegation. Instead of the Executive Committee recalling the delegation from London and holding a new congress to study the British stand with respect to the Palestinian cause, they decided to keep the delegation in London. They asked its members to tour the United States of America, where they could publicize the Palestinian stand on the struggle with Zionism.⁵³

⁵³ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-175.

During October 1923, the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress held two important meetings. Two distinct political lines emerged out of these meetings. The first meeting was held on 2 October. The Executive Committee was completely occupied with the assessment of the delegation's work in London. In this meeting, it also evaluated the results of the delegation's trip to London and the United States of America. The participants in the meeting, instead of adopting a revolutionary stand, decided together with the head of the Executive Committee Musa Kazim to send the delegation again to London. They declined to adopt a strong and radical stand, and a mandate system was established and authorized.

The second meeting of the Executive Committee was held on 26 October. Among the participants in the meeting were: Amin Husseini and Mohammed Ali At-Tahir, the secretary of the Palestine committee in Cairo. At-Tahir called for staging a revolution. In his view the revolution was the reliable means to accomplish the Palestinian goals of independence and liberty. In response, Musa Kazim stated that one of the strong supporters of the Palestinian cause in London proposed similar methods to that of At-Tahir. Musa Kazim rejected the use of any revolutionary measures to pressure the British and the Zionists. At the same time, he expressed satisfaction with the achievements by the Executive Committee's policies.⁵⁴ In fact, the Executive Committee continued to commit itself to the policy of de-collaboration with the government.

THE STATE OF WEAKNESS AND LOSS OF CONTROL

The Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress by late 1923 seemed to have not comprehended adequately the situation of the national movement. The committee seemed to be aware of the fact that the British together with the Zionists were working on weakening and dismantling the Palestinian national movement. This action by the British and the Zionists was evident in the formation of Al-Hizb Al-Watani (the National Party) and Hizb Az-Zurra' (the Party of Cultivators).

After the Executive Committee had boycotted the legislative council and had ridded the nation of other alternatives to this project, the Zionists actively attempted to form a popular party for the Palestinians. They assigned this duty to F. Kisch who first contacted Assad Ash-Shuqeiri. The two men met and agreed in principle to form the party. Kisch's objective was the formation of a political party, which would approve the Balfour Declaration. Since the general sentiment did not comply with such a

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 188-189.

premise, he decided not to include political items in the party's program. He discussed his objectives by emphasizing the economic goals of the party. Moreover, he considered the three men for membership in the party: Ash-Shuqeiri, Arif Ad-Dajani and Ragheb An-Nashashibi. The latter supported the group secretly due to his status as a mayor of Jerusalem. He always therefore sent his relative Fakhri An-Nashashibi as his envoy to the meetings.⁵⁵

The National Party held its first meeting on 8 November 1923 in Jerusalem. The attendees were estimated at 120 representatives ranging from mayors to members of city councils, to special interest groups in Palestinian towns and villages. Among them were: Arif Al-Kajani, Suleiman At-Taje Al-Faruqi, Umar As-Salih Al-Barguthi, Bulus Shahadih, owner of *Mirat Ash-Sharq* newspaper, and some members of the An-Nashashibi family.

The founders of this party seemed to have benefited from earlier experiences. They therefore adopted a political program similar to that of the Executive Committee. They officially called for a national government. They further demanded the promulgation of a constitution, which would include a total rejection of the following: the Balfour Declaration, the employed constitution, the government legislative and consultative council, and the proposed Arab agency. The party also considered Palestine as an inseparable part of the Arab region and Arabic as the official language of the country.⁵⁶

The Zionists were also instrumental in the formation of the party *Hizb Az-Zurra'*, which, regardless of its name (the Peasants or the Cultivators), was politically oriented. Their effort aimed at deepening the rift within the national movement. This party grew at the expense of the declining Al-Watani Party. By disguising their political goals behind economic programs and treating cultivators equally regardless of their class differences, the Zionists could temporarily succeed in their work. The role of the national leadership in revealing this party's pro-Zionist objectives and the rising awareness of the peasantry shortened the life span of this party.

The various branches of the party differed in their announced views towards Zionism. The branch in Hebron always declared its agreement with the government before the masses. It also informed the government about its support of Zionism. In many other parts of Palestine the party very often attempted to identify itself with the goals of the National Movement. By this action the party was targeting the support of the cultivators.

⁵⁵ F. Kisch, *Palestine Diary*. London, Victor Gollancz, 1936, pp. 50, 53-73.

⁵⁶ Al-Hut, op. cit., pp. 180-181.

The various branches of the party agreed altogether on three main principles. First, they were all in favor of collaboration with the government based on the constitution. Second, they demanded that the government should defend the rights of the Muslims in terms of the Waqf. Third, they called on the government to maintain an equilibrium between the cultivators and the city dwellers in terms of their treatment.⁵⁷

The Zionists and their allies, the British, could not succeed completely in weakening the Palestinian national movement when they approached from its domestic angle. This movement was primarily an offshoot of a wider Arab liberation movement. In other words, the Palestinian cause was up to 1924, viewed as an important part of the wider Arab question. According to a news report from the Royal Palace in Amman, Transjordan, Sharif Hussein submitted before the British High Commissioner his preconditions with respect to resolving the Palestinian problems. The commissioner immediately reported these conditions to his government in order to receive a reply. Sharif Hussein's preconditions could be deduced from his statement for the Zionist's delegation. He indicated that the Arabs would welcome the Jews if they followed the proper means. They could preserve the right to enter the Arab region only if they abandoned the Zionist ideals. He added that the final word would be reserved for the Palestinians themselves, and he would be fully satisfied with what the Palestinians would choose for themselves.⁵⁸

In fact the different Palestinian political leaders, with the exception of the Al-Watani Party, visited Amman. They went to meet with and greet Sharif Hussein. The Al-Watani Party later on decided to go to Amman for this purpose. Upon the arrival of its delegation it was singled out by thousands of people who marched to Amman. They threw eggs and rotten tomatoes at the delegation of this party, which might indicate that the masses were aware of the party's background.⁵⁹

The situation in Palestine in the early part of 1924 seemed to have been immensely critical. On one hand the leadership of the Executive Committee felt it was losing ground by being targeted by different parties in and outside of Palestine. On the other hand, this leadership, though it negotiated with the British, could not accomplish its political ends. The Executive Committee, therefore, held a meeting on Thursday, 28 February

⁵⁷ Mahmud Izzat Darwazih, *Hawl Al-Harakih Al-Arabiyyah Al-Hadithih*, Part 3. Sayda: Al-Maktabah Al-Asriah, 1950, pp. 34-44.

⁵⁸ *Filistin*, Friday, 8 February 1924.

⁵⁹ *Filistin*, Friday, 19 February 1924.

1924. This committee had on its agenda a number of burning issues among which were the following: First, the committee was in the process of selecting a delegation which would be charged with discussing with Sharif Hussein the issue of the Anglo-Arab Treaty. Second, the participants in the meeting were determined to call on the government to assign back the administration of education to the Executive Committee, i.e. the government was supposed to turn the state of this administration back to its previous one in the early years of British occupation.⁶⁰

The Palestinian national movement seemed to have tried to make up for its failure to deliver on its political commitment by turning to the issue of education during that period. The Executive Committee sent a memo to the British High Commission concerning the administration of education in Palestine. In that memo, they demanded that the government turn the administration of education back to the Palestinians. The Palestinian Arabs should be treated equally with the Jews, and they should possess the right to run their schools and the education system.⁶¹

Another indication of the Executive Committee's loss of ground could be seen in the widely spreading rumor in Jerusalem that Prince Abdullah Ibn Hussein might become the king of Palestine and Trans-Jordan, were they to become one entity and the people subject to one ruler.

In this regard, Issa Al-Issa posed a question as to whether the enthronement of Prince Abdullah over Palestine and Transjordan would be beneficial for Palestine. In answer to this question, Al-Issa stated that since the Prince's arrival in Transjordan, his policy of submission to the British authority, his views on Zionism, and his huge waste of money were not promising. The Prince's statement to the correspondent of the Times indicated that if the representatives of both Palestinians and Zionists were to convene, the Palestinians would discover that Zionism was not necessarily a threat as they had claimed.

Another example was his statement to *Palestine Weekly* in 1921, in which he indicated that the Arabs should not demand that the British Government back away from its commitments to Zionism. That was not to ignore the fact that *Lisan Al-Arab* newspaper, which was financed and supported by the Zionists, represented the Prince's views. Based this and other reasons, the author indicated that "Prince Abdullah's holding the throne of

⁶⁰ *Filistin*, Friday 9 February 1924.

⁶¹ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 26 February 1924.

Palestine was not of a lesser danger than enthroning in Palestine a Jewish King.”⁶²

Contrary to the views of Prince Abdullah believed by the Palestinians, the Palestinian leadership on Tuesday 11 March 1924 in Ash-Shunih village in the eastern part of the Jordan Valley accepted the caliphate of Sharif Hussein of Mecca (over the entire Arab region including Palestine) in a big ceremony.⁶³ The difference between Prince Abdullah and his father Sharif Hussein of Mecca could be seen in Khalil As-Sakakini’s (the secretary of the Executive Committee) account on Sharif Hussein’s view on Zionism. According to him, when the Palestinian representatives departed to meet Sharif Hussein and to declare unchallenged approval of his caliphate, a delegation representing the Orthodox Jews went to congratulate him for holding this title. He received them with warm welcome and stated that among his duties was to rule in a just manner. The time of his caliphate would be marked by the prevalence of brotherhood and security. In response to the question by the chairman of the delegation put before Sharif Hussein with regard to his views on Zionism, he pointed out that he considered the non religious policy of Zionism as being unfair to Muslims, Christians and Orthodox Jews in Palestine. Since he considered himself to be a just caliph, he was determined to vigorously resist the non-religious policy of Zionism all over the Islamic World.⁶⁴

The Palestinian leadership’s strong stand on the Hashemites and their diverging political attitudes and concerns was not necessarily an indication of the Palestinian national movement’s strength. The movement’s constant role as mediator between the government of Palestine and the Palestinian masses could only contribute to the weakness of the National Movement. Apparently the traditional leadership in Palestine continued to show moderate stands towards the government. This leadership, at the same time, did not behave in accordance with its role as the vanguard of a liberation movement.

In early April an unknown person attacked two Jews in Jaffa. In response, some Jews in Tel Aviv carried out an offensive against three Palestinian Arabs. One of the Jews was murdered and the other two were seen in Al-Manshiyyah area near Haifa, where they were armed and seeking trouble. On the following days, the Jews of Tel Aviv were very insulting to Arabs. The British Police did nothing to put an end to these scenes. This negli-

⁶² *Filistin*, Tuesday, 4 March 1924.

⁶³ *Filistin*, Friday, 14 March 1924.

⁶⁴ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 25 March 1924.

gence by the police encouraged Jews some days later to stab a Palestinian man to death by the gate of his home.

In response to this incident and to police negligence, the Executive Committee sent a memo to the British High Commissioner. In this memo the Palestinian traditional leadership expressed their great surprise at the government's arrest of several Palestinian nationals. They considered the government's action to be discriminatory. In their view the government should arrest those on both sides who committed criminal acts, both Arabs and Jews. The government should not punish Palestinian Arabs while allowing Jews to escape punishment. In their final analysis, this act only showed the government's friendly attitude toward Jews while being so harsh on the Arabs.⁶⁵

By 1924, the weakness of the Palestinian national movement became more evident. The general sentiment in the country coincided with an expressed resentment of the movement's situation. This sentiment appeared in writings in the Palestinian newspapers, through which Palestinian intellectuals presented their views and reservations with respect to the movement. Those views also essentially expressed the perceptions of the masses.

Some Palestinian leaders perceived that the Palestinian national movement suffered immensely from a lack of activism. They attributed this state to the nation, to the lack of commitment by the nation to its charter and to its increasing despair. Great numbers of intellectuals in the country agreed with those leaders with respect to the weakness and stagnation of the movement. They, however, attributed this situation to the leadership itself rather than to the nation.

The nation had trusted the Executive Committee and the Islamic Christian Societies. The Executive Committee, contrary to expectation, did not live up to its commitment to properly manage the national struggle and the liberation war. The author of an article entitled "Ad-Dawihila aqd Mu'tamar" in *Filistin* newspaper held that the Executive Committee and Islamic Christian Societies could not be totally blamed for the weakness. The attacks by the Al-Watani Party and the Az-Zurra' Party against the committee and the society contributed greatly to the drift within the movement and its ultimate weakness. The author further defended the organizations, saying that the leadership's ability to perform is should not have been troubled by family tensions, partisan conflicts, and personal aspirations.⁶⁶

⁶⁵ *Filistin*, Friday, 11 April 1924.

⁶⁶ *Filistin*, Friday, 16 May 1924.

The Palestinian national movement was apparently affected by a wide range of objective and subjective factors, leading it to its ultimate state of stagnation and weakness.

The promise that the Executive Committee could hold a new Palestinian Arab Congress or could bring about national unity and solidarity encouraged some prominent figures to take the initiative and try to remedy the situation. On 8 June 1924, a journalists' congress was convened in Haifa. Among the participants were: Najib Nassar of *Al-Karmel* newspaper in Haifa, Issa Al-Issa of *Filistin* newspaper in Jaffa, Bulus Shahadih Mirat of *Ash-Sharq* newspaper in Jerusalem, Ilya Zaka of *An-Nafir* newspaper in Haifa, Hasan Fahmi Ad-Dajani of *Sawt Ash-Shab* newspaper in Bethlehem, Khalili Nasr of *Al-Urdun* newspaper in Haifa, Jamil Al-Bajri of *Az-Zahrah* magazine in Haifa and Al-Sheikh Khalil Al-Majadali of *Az-Zumar* newspaper in Akka. The participants held four rounds of discussion.

In the first round they extensively discussed the issue of reconciling the views of various newspapers' journalists and the journalism union, which was occupied with the Palestinian national cause. The attendees hoped that they would accomplish this goal soon. They meanwhile issued a manifesto. In it they expressed great concern on the issue of the national cause and the need to bring about a national committee where they could reconcile the views and prepare the ground for holding the Seventh Palestinian Arab Congress.

In the second, the third, and the fourth rounds, the Congress decided the following: First, that Palestinian Arab journalism was characterized by solidarity and a concerted effort to serve the vital national interest. It, therefore, should distance itself from the exchange of personal insult and intimidation.

Second, they called for putting more emphasis on caring for the economy and agriculture so that agriculture would flourish, and the economy would prosper.

Third, they called for countering the activities of the newly formed Az-Zurra' Party in Hebron, because this party was in disagreement with the nation's stand on the issue of the British Mandate and the Balfour Declaration.

Fourth, they were to stand against sectarian provocation, which might create a deep drift within the national movement.

Fifth, they called for the formation of a journalist trade union under the name of the Arab Journalism Trade Union in Palestine.⁶⁷

Despite all efforts made to halt the activities of both the Al-Watani and Az-Zurra' Parties because of their ties with the Zionist organization, these parties continued to carry out their established goals. They always presented themselves as greatly concerned about the national interest. Their success in this regard could be attributed to the weakness of the National Movement.

In July 1924 the Al-Watani and Az-Zurra' parties sent a telegraph to the Society of Caliphates in India and the Society of Tadamun Al-Ulama in Egypt. In that telegraph they stated that the mosques in Palestine and the tombs of the prophets 'called on them' to protest the installation of the Balfour Declaration as grounds for the British Arab Treaty. They further asserted that Sharif Hussein of Mecca did not possess the right to sign such treaty without obtaining the approval of the *ummah*. Otherwise, his authorization of the treaty would not be a source of its legal standing. Furthermore this treaty would embarrass its signatories in the coming Islamic Conference in which Palestine would be represented. The two parties also sent a similar telegraph to the British Overseas Colonies Office and prominent newspapers in England.⁶⁸

King Hussein Ibn Ali obviously opposed the proposed Arab-Anglo treaty. His stand on the treaty stemmed from his disagreement with the suggested resolution of the Palestinian cause. This resolution according to the treaty would be based on the terms of the Balfour Declaration.⁶⁹

Indeed the issue of the Arab-Anglo treaty was greatly sensitive and controversial. The whole *ummah* was occupied with this issue, while various political groups attempted to politically capitalize on the matter. Then it became an expression of the weakness and the deep rift within the Palestinian national movement. The earlier stand adopted by the Az-Zurra' and Al-Watani parties forced the Executive Committee to re-emphasize its established position on the proposed Arab-Anglo treaty.

On 2 September 1924, the Executive Committee issued a call to the entire *ummah*. This call indicated that in accordance with the recommendations made by the Sixth Palestinian Arab Congress held in Jaffa, its Executive Committee was supposed to follow up with Sharif Hussein on the issue of

⁶⁷ *Filistin*, Friday, 13 June 1924.

⁶⁸ *Filistin*, Friday, 18 July 1924.

⁶⁹ *Filistin*, Tuesday 12 August 1924.

the treaty. The committee had to insure that Sharif Hussein would not sign an agreement or treaty unless it corresponded with the ambition and interests of the Palestinian people. It should not also contradict the major principles adopted by the Fifth Palestinian Arab Congress held in Nablus. The committee, therefore, found itself totally obliged to ask Sharif Hussein to consider the Palestinian Charter in his negotiation with the British. He either signed a treaty that would accomplish independence within Arab unity, or he rejected any treaty based on a Zionist policy. The committee expressed satisfaction over the king's endeavor to achieve the *ummah's* goals of independence. It was also pleased with his assurance to the *ummah* that any agreement would be only authorized after it had been approved by the *ummah*. The committee asserted that the Anglo-Arab treaty, presented to Sharif Hussein in spirit and letter contradicted the *ummah's* interests. This treaty therefore could not survive.⁷⁰

Despite the weakness of the Palestinian national movement, this movement could still show strong stands on vital concerns. The movement in essence could still rely on the support of major figures in the Arab liberation movements. In an interview, Shakib Arsalan, a prominent Syrian figure, expressed strong views on the issue of Zionism. He stated that he totally rejected the idea of having foreigners settling in the Arab region and becoming a majority. Thousands of Russian and Polish Jewry immigrated to the Arab motherland. Their immigration would expectedly cause a great deal of trouble, since the Arabs would not accept this kind of development. The idea of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine supported by the British and a portion of Palestinian Jews, he continued, immensely disturbed the Arabs. He hoped that the Arabs would receive the total support of various nations in the search for Arab independence. He also called for the support of those nations in attempts to negotiate and to reach a settlement with the occupier. Needless to state, he added, independence should not imply our hatred for any other people.⁷¹

In accordance with this supportive stand by some Arab figures, which might have represented a great proportion of the Arab *ummah*, the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress took a vigorous stand on the issue of Lord Balfour's visit to Palestine to inaugurate Hebrew University on 24 and 27 February 1925. The Executive Committee adopted several measures. The thrust of these measures was the boycott by all official and non-official representative bodies of that visit. The day on which he arrived was to be considered a day of mourning. The committee also sent a telegraph to Balfour. In this telegraph, the committee

⁷⁰ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 2 September 1924.

⁷¹ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 17 October 1924.

pointed out that in accordance with the view of the national body, as espoused in various parts of the country, the Balfour Declaration had created a devastating result. The committee adopted a number of steps to be taken on the day of Balfour's arrival. It was stated that the people of Palestine were victims of this policy. They refused to meet with Balfour; however, it could have been possible had he not issued the declaration. The whole country, therefore, would go on strike on the day of his arrival. All bodies officially or non-officially elected, individuals, and national bodies were supposed not to meet with him publicly or privately. All bodies in charge of administering the holy places and national institutions were not to allow his entry to those places. All Arab journals would appear in a mourning format.⁷²

The Al-Watani Party, the competing body of the Executive Committee, issued its own call to the *ummah* concerning Balfour's visit to Palestine. The party convened on 8 March 1925 and decided the following:

Firstly: The day of Balfour's arrival must be used by the Palestinian Arabs to express their discontent towards Balfour, whose declaration had a severe impact on the whole nation. Lord Balfour, according to the call, should be held responsible for this painful experience. It was in fact, greatly devastating to the country. The future of the country had become uncertain. Public security was lacking. Their interests were badly affected, and their holy rights were crushed.

Secondly: The party urged the people to prove their unity and genuine patriotism. They were supposed to go on a peaceful strike and to close their stores. At the same time, the day of Balfour's arrival must be considered a day of sorrow.

Thirdly: They should express their discontent and disaffection to the British established policy to the League of Nations, the British Foreign Office, and to lord Balfour personally.

Fourthly: The party urged the Higher Islamic Council to boycott Balfour's visit. It should also close the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Holy Rock in order to halt his attempt to visit the holy places.⁷³

Despite all these warnings, and the call for a unified stand on the issue of the visit, Ragheb An-Nashashibi the mayor of Jerusalem, three employees in the municipality and a few sheikhs did not stand by the Palestinian

⁷² *Filistin*, Friday, 27 February 1925.

⁷³ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 11 March 1925.

people and their national movement to boycott Balfour's visit. They, in fact, participated in the inauguration ceremony of Hebrew University.⁷⁴ This action by An-Nashashibi and his colleagues revealed the gap between the slogans of Al-Watani and their real political behavior. It furthermore, shed light on the lack of unity within the national movement.

Lord Balfour's visit to Palestine and to Syria came as an occasion on which the people of Greater Syria expressed their solidarity and anti-colonial feelings. To them, Lord Balfour symbolized the British Zionist policy in Palestine (Southern Syria).

On Wednesday 8 April, the day of Lord Balfour's arrival at Damascus, the French Government tightened the security measures in an attempt to save Balfour's life during the visit. It sent a number of secret policemen, the police chief in the main headquarters, and the police chief in Huran, accompanied by twelve policemen, to the station of Al-Himmah. They were supposed to guard and accompany Lord Balfour to Damascus. In spite of all these security considerations, the people of Syria stoned the vehicle, which transported Lord Balfour, his wife and his entourage.⁷⁵

The other expression of the Palestinian-Syrian mutual concern became evident at the time of the Syrian national uprising between 1925 and 1927. The Executive Committee sent a telegraph to the League of Nations Mandates Commission. In this telegraph, the committee protested against the French tyranny in Syria and their harsh treatment of the Syrians. The telegraph contained vehement denouncement of the French bombardment of Damascus, which destroyed houses and killed or injured a great number of inhabitants. The committee obviously urged the Merchants Commission to act immediately and diligently to put an end to the French extermination of innocent people. In response to the call, a local committee in Jerusalem was at hand, its main task being to encourage and manage the Palestinians' support of their brothers in Syria.⁷⁶

The Executive Committee decided that the Palestinians shouldered two major responsibilities toward the Syrian people in light of the disturbing acts by the French.

First, they were supposed to reveal all information relating to Syrians; incidents in each and every country around the globe, in addition to sending letters of protest to various international bodies.

⁷⁴ Kayyali, op. cit., p. 193.

⁷⁵ *Filistin*, 14 April 1925.

⁷⁶ *Filistin*, 1965, 822-65, p.1.

Second, they were to contact and work with charity donors in both Arab and Islamic Worlds. There they could collect relief materials to aid the Syrians. It is worth noting in this regard that the Higher Islamic Council assumed the charge of contacting Arab and Muslim kings, officials and charity donors to enhance the relief effort.⁷⁷

The Palestinians' perception as part of the wider Arab liberation movement may explain their constant reliance on both the Islamic and Arab Worlds. This reliance, very often, reflected the state of stagnation which the Palestinian national movement suffered. On 26 May 1925, Jamal Husseini wrote an article entitled "Bayan Waraja." In his article he emphasized that the Palestinian Arabs, in their struggle for independence, desperately needed the aid of other Arabs in their quest for independence. They desperately needed the aid of the Arab Muslims and Christians all over the globe. The Executive Committee reported to the League of Nations and its Council. In its report, it argued against the Zionists schemes in Palestine and their claims to the country. It also reported to the League of Nations Mandates Commission, which held its meetings in June and October of 1925. In the report, it spoke of the injustice done to the Palestinian Arabs.

Finally, the committee announced that the Palestinians were calling upon all clubs, societies, theological and political institutions in Arab and Islamic countries to contribute their support. They requested that these organizations send telegraphs to the League of Nations. In these telegraphs, they were to protest the unjust policies conducted by the British towards the Palestinians. They were also supposed to aid the Palestinians in their endeavor to achieve a just settlement to their cause.⁷⁸

Although the Palestinian leadership identified itself with the wider Arab movement, they began as early as 1925 to accurately assess the state affairs in the Arab World. The ideas of an Arab caliphate and Arab unity were no longer accessible.

This situation was due to different factors, which were illustrated in the articles of *Filistin*. Issa Al-Issa, owner and chief editor of *Filistin*, wrote an article which appeared on 19 June 1925 in which he stated that the Palestinians and their leadership supported Sharif Hussein, and they still strongly identified themselves with his ideals. In other words, they insisted on either the formation of an Arab kingdom including Al-Hijaz, Transjordan, Palestine, Syria and Iraq, or least establishing a sort of unity

⁷⁷ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 27 November 1925.

⁷⁸ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 26 November 1925.

for these areas. The policy of Sharif Hussein in this respect was characterized by ambiguity. He tended to personalize it, and as a result, his stand suffered very often from being contradictory. He was stubborn and selfish, and these factors contributed to his Isolation. His son Prince Abdullah caused him a great deal of trouble, which Great Britain utilized for its own good. In summary, Sharif Hussein's projects did not bear fruit.⁷⁹

The Palestinians had begun as early as 1927 to re-evaluate their relationship with the Arab National Movement. The collapse of the idea of an Arab caliphate and the inability of the Palestinian national movement to meet the national demands through adopting the policy of negotiations with the British had inspired the shift towards acting as Palestinian Nationals in the struggle with Zionism. The Palestinians suffered from a great sense of frustration.

The Palestinians no longer had faith in any sort of Arab unity. For them the formation of an Arab League could not be realized. They looked upon this idea as being foreign in its origin. They considered it to be deceiving and distracting the Arab masses from coping with their own local matters. This idea was also seen as unreasonable and unattainable, because several Arab countries were under colonial rule. The idea seemed to have been designed for widening the state of disunity; to lay the foundation for internal conflict, and in the long run, to drive the Arab society into a state of chaos and weakness. The Palestinians, as expressed in *Filistin*, found that the idea of an Arab League would never be realized, even though the political boundaries had been deleted. This situation could be attributed to the fact that this idea was emotionally inspired and resulted from wishful thinking. Based on these premises, the chief editor stated that the Palestinians would commit an error when they switched from demanding their independence to the idea of an Arab League. Al-Hijaz, Iraq and Egypt, meanwhile, were working for their own independence. The Arab countries were working for their own good. The duty of the Palestinian country, therefore, should be to work for its own sake and to take care of its own affairs. Otherwise, if the countries were to keep busy with the idea of the Arab League, they and their grandchildren would vanish, and Palestine would still remain at the mercy of the colonization and the colonizers.⁸⁰

The Arab countries achieved certain benefits through the policy of collaboration and negotiation with the colonizers. Their relations with the colonizers were structured along with internationally ratified treaties. Palestine, meanwhile, was isolated. This reality forced the Palestinians to

⁷⁹ *Filistin*, Friday, 19 June 1925.

⁸⁰ *Filistin*, Friday, 19 December 1927.

think along the principle that the interest of Palestine comes first. Al-Issa pointed out that the Palestinians' problems would be attributed to the misconduct of their leadership, which created tension within the national movement and the Palestinian society. This is not to neglect their role in attracting the people's attention to external matters, rather than putting an emphasis on running the domestic affairs. These aspects distanced them from achieving independence for Palestine, and in return, they identified themselves with the delusion of the idea of an Arab League.

They, in fact owed it to themselves and their country to achieve first a Palestinian league. The author continued that he was pro the policy of negotiation with the British colonizers. However, he emphasized that this policy should bring about independence for Palestine and self determination for the Palestinians. In his words, Palestine is no less than Al-Hijaz or Iraq in having its political future determined, and the Palestinians were no less than the Iraqis and the Egyptians in terms of being qualified to practice constitutional rule.⁸¹

The political mood in Palestine was molded by a general dissatisfaction with the policy of negotiation with the British and with the failure of the leadership of the Palestinian national movement. The Palestinians were discontented with the policy of negotiation with the colonizers conducted by their leaders, while this policy brought about political independence for some Arab countries. Furthermore, the rivalry and existing tension between various political figures and parties contributed to the weakness of the national movement. As early as July 1925, the intellectuals were severe critics of the political parties in Palestine. In an article written on 10 July 1925 in *Filistin*, Al-Issa pointed out that since the political parties had been formed, these parties had not executed useful work for Palestine. They only, Al-Issa stated, caused destruction. These parties did not act as a serious opposition to the Executive Committee, and they most importantly did not call for a general congress to discuss a reliable means to serve the general interest. They were formed, he emphasized, to compete with the Executive Committee and consequently destroy the national movement.⁸²

The state of stagnation which the national movement witnessed triggered the Palestinian search for the best means to cope with the ills of the movement. It was time to look for an alternative. The Palestinians were well aware of the need for a new organization. This new body would pose as the vanguard of the nation in both the economic and political struggle with Zionism. However, they acknowledged the fact that Husseini, the

⁸¹ *Filistin*, Tuesday, 3 January 1928.

⁸² *Filistin*, Friday, 10 July 1925.

head of the Islamic Council, would vehemently oppose the formation of this organization unless he would be granted its leadership.⁸³

The stagnation of the movement had long delayed the convening of the Seventh Palestinian Arab Congress. This Congress was finally held on 20 June 1928 in Jerusalem under the pressure of various interests and political groups. All parts of Palestine were represented in the Congress. According to Izzat Darwazih, it included, in addition to the leaders of the national movement “Spies and land realtors to Zionism and thugs.”⁸⁴ Due to this kind of gathering, the participants were almost incapable of adopting strong decisions.

Finally, the involvement of young intellectuals in the Congress led to the adoption of reasonably acceptable measures. In accordance with the Palestinian’s established right, they demanded the formation of a parliamentary democratic state. This task was necessarily obligatory to the League of Nations. It was also in harmony with the promises given by the Allies in World War I. They also emphasized in this respect that Palestine was no less civilized compared to its Arab sisters. Furthermore, they declared that Palestine was no longer willing to accept colonial rule. A representative body for Palestine was to be created in order to formulate a constitution, which would guarantee the formation of a parliamentary government. In the final analysis, the Congress adopted all decisions taken by previous Palestinian Congresses.⁸⁵

In conclusion, the periods of 1917-1919 and 1920-1927 under focus in this chapter can be described as being immensely critical in the history of Palestine and the Palestinian national movement. The period on the whole seems to have suffered a lack of successes in terms of bringing about an end to the policy of the Balfour Declaration. The Palestinian national movement, as outcomes show, was short of acting as a serious mover and shaker of events. Moreover, it could not exert control over various factions within the politically active Palestinian camp.

Apparently, the Palestinian national movement represented by the Executive Committee had undergone a process of gradual decline. This decline could be attributed in its greater part to the defeat of the Arab liberation movement by the colonial powers at the end of World War I. The Palestinian national movement, as an offshoot of the wider Arab liberation movement, stood strongly in opposition to colonial plans in the area, as was manifested in the role of the Palestinians in the 1920 national uprising.

⁸³ *Filistin*, Friday, 4 May 1928.

⁸⁴ Darwazah, *Al-Qadiyyah*. p. 59.

⁸⁵ Z’aitir, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322.

The defeat of the Arab movement motivated some of its leaders to adopt a policy of negotiation and mutual understanding with the British as a means to achieving gradual independence for the fragmented Arab region. The Palestinian movement could only follow the footsteps of the Arab leadership. The above mentioned policy obviously led to the formation of political entities in both Transjordan and Iraq, but not Palestine. A collaboration with the British in an attempt to accomplish independence for Palestine could only lead to the acceptance of the Zionist policy, in other words, a negation of the Palestinian national rights. The British stood strongly for the realization of their commitment to the Zionist idea. In fact, despite the Executive Committee's constant attempts to demand independence for the country, it was unable to deliver on its commitments before the Palestinian masses.

The split within the Arab liberation movement on the issue of how to deal with the colonizers created a heated dispute within the Palestinian camp, whether to support or to stand against the leadership of Sharif Hussein, and his sons became a dividing matter among the Palestinian leaders. The rift within the Palestinian leadership was motivated by class and family differences, not to ignore the role of both the British and the Zionists in planting the seeds of dissension.

The period under focus was very crucial to the traditional leadership in Palestine. This leadership was put to a serious test. Its activities within the national movement did not bring about far reaching results. The policy of collaboration with the British proved to be important. Their leadership, therefore, would be seriously challenged by the end of this period. Nonetheless, the whole of this period laid the foundation for the opening of a new chapter in the history of the Palestinian national movement and the Palestinian struggle for independence.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE (1928-1931): THE RISING MASSES AND THE TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS ALLIANCES

The study of the Palestinian national movement requires a periodization based on its evolving character. While this movement floundered in a state of stagnation during the period up to 1928, the period afterwards witnessed a certain change, bringing about a sizable difference between the two periods. In general the era under focus, 1928 to 1939, can be characterized by the process of transformation within the Palestinian national movement and its relation with the Arab liberation movement against the backdrop of struggle with Zionism and the British.

In this chapter I intend to examine the nature of the transformation process. Basically the investigation will center on the issue of whether this transformation led to the entry by the Palestinian national movement into a new stage in the struggle, or if it simply served to maintain the existing tone of the movement. This assessment, consequently, will put the great number of developments and the quantitative and qualitative changes into perspective.

Speaking of the newly emerging forces within the Palestinian resistance does not imply their impact on the whole scene. Both the traditional groups and leadership and the newly emerging revolutionary forces were rather active in the period under focus. They were all acting for the achievement of a national goal, i.e., the independence of Palestine and the termination of the Zionist Idea of “a Jewish home in Palestine.” At the same time, they differed in their stand on the issue of British colonialism, and consequently, they acted as rivals. Their differing stands grounded on heterogeneous interest should have nourished this inspired rivalry.

The competition between the two major forces had obviously centered on the issue of assuming leadership of the national struggle. The traditional leadership had failed in accomplishing what they had committed themselves to in terms of the national ends, due to their policy of negotiation and collaboration with the British. Consequently, they intended to preserve their leading role in the national movement. In fact, in this study we

stand before struggling forces within the national movements as well as a wide range of alliances manifested clearly in the struggle in Palestine. Furthermore, the internal struggle was evident in the attempts by various factions and leaders to embody their activism through the formation of political parties and organizations.

The discussion in this chapter will consider several themes, as highlighted earlier. It will center on three major eras. Firstly, it will address the period up to the Wailing Wall incidents. The year 1929 marked the early formative elements of a new era and presented alternatives to the declining traditional leadership.

Secondly, 1929 to 1935 was an era of alliances and polarization within the Palestinian national movement, complicated by an immense increase in Jewish immigration and settlement building. In other words, this period carried under its wings the conditions and developments leading up to the breakout of a wider national uprising.

Thirdly, the Palestinian national uprising, 1936 to 1939, can be examined in terms of the struggle with both Zionism and the British. It requires a look at the various alliances, stands, successes, failures, results and their impact on the course of the national struggle itself.

Embryonic Formations of the Crucial Years

The status of the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress underlined in the previous chapter, was critical. Its declining position as a leading body of the Palestinian national movement raised many questions concerning the future and role of the traditional leadership. It moreover, stimulated the rise of new politically oriented groups. They came in the wake of the Executive Committee's declining status, seemingly in an attempt to refuel the national movement with new blood. This rescue mission, though it did not at the time offer an alternative to the Executive Committee, laid the foundation for the emergence of serious contenders for taking over the leadership of the national movement. Moreover, this development acted as a catalyst in the breakout of the Wailing Wall incident of 1929.

The Islamic Movement in Palestine gained strength in the 1920s. The stagnant status of the Executive Committee inspired a search for alternative ideological grounds. Islam then became a highly viable option. In April 1928, Mu'tamar An-Nawadi Al-Islamiyyah (the Islamic Physical Training Club) held a meeting. This meeting was chaired by Ragheb Afandi Al-

Imam. In this meeting Mohammed Izzat Darwazih proposed the formation of clubs in each and every part of Palestine under the name of Jam'iyyat Ash-Shubban Al-Muslimin (Young Men's Muslim Associations). In this discussion Hasan Sudqi Ad-Dajani, Hasan Abu Al-Sa'ud, Arif Al-Budiri and Musa Al-Kayyali participated. By the end of the meeting, the Congress decided to establish societies, where all would be committed to the same program. Each society, meanwhile, would have its own administrative body.¹

The resurgence of Islam as an ideological alternative might have encouraged the traditional Palestinian leadership members to utilize an Islamic platform to their own benefit. Their main concern was to preserve the leading position within the national movement. The early breakout of the conflict over the Wailing Wall area and the right of Jewish worshippers to install facilities near the wall came as an opportunity for the traditional leadership to revive its role within the national movement. In early November 1928, an Islamic Congress was held in Jerusalem. Participants from all parts of Palestine and the various countries within the Islamic world were estimated at seven hundred. The conferees elected Amin Al-Husseini to chair the Congress. They also formed a delegation composed of twelve members to meet with Lock, the acting British High Commissioner. The task was to obtain a clear British declaration in which the British would guarantee the Muslims' right in the Wailing Wall area. The conferees considered a number of decisions and measures during their sessions. They denounced each and every attempt to grant the Jews' rights in the Wailing Wall area. The Jews, nonetheless, proceeded with changing the surroundings by enclosing some sort of facilities there. Moreover, the Zionists held the British Government responsible for the outcome, which would result from efforts to preserve Palestinians' rights in the area.

The participants in the final draft emphasized the power possessed by the Islamic world and threatened to use it when it was necessary to maintain the Palestinian rights. Among the most important results from that Congress was the formation of Jam'iyyat Hirasat Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa wa Al-Amakin Al-Muqaddasih Al-Islamiyyah (the Society for Guarding Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Islamic Holy Places). Its main headquarters were to be located in Jerusalem. It had to coordinate its effort with Lajnit Ad-Difa' 'An Al-Buraq, the committee for defending Al-Buraq (the area of

¹ *Filistin*, Jaffa, 24 April 1928.

the Wailing Wall). It was also designed to execute the Congress' decisions and to open branches in various Islamic countries.²

The traditional leadership in Palestine, in fact, constantly showed a great deal of patience and self-control. They always tried to avoid conflict with the British. The day of the Islamic Congress on 1 November 1928 and the following day, which was the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, were marked by tranquility.³

The move by the traditional leadership in Palestine seems inconsistent with the sentiment presented in *Filistin* newspaper two weeks before the Islamic Congress had convened. The author stated that through an entire decade, the calls on the Muslim leaders to support the Palestinians in their struggle were useless. The incidents concerning the Wailing Wall should have inspired the Palestinians to act more diligently. The Palestinians, he continued, should not depend on the Muslim kings in Egypt, Iraq or Afghanistan, because they were totally occupied with their own internal affairs. Needless to point out, that even if they had the will to do something for Palestine, they would not be able to do so. The author suggested that the Palestinian should act like the Zionist in his struggle with the enemy. Their action should be based on self-reliance and consider economic means as tools in the war against the Zionism.⁴

The pressured Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress by 1929 found itself in a severely difficult situation. Its ability to deliver on its political commitments became extremely limited. It was obviously loosing ground. It was, therefore, struggling hard to rescue its status and role as a leading body for the national movement. On Monday, 5 April 1928, the Executive Committee held a meeting of 16 figures in Rawdit Al-Maarif. Out of this meeting, a number of decisions came:

First, they protested against the illegal laws enacted by the government such as the law concerning local governments

Second, they decided on a compulsory donation of ten or more *maleems* required of each Palestinian. This donation was designed to aid the Executive Committee in carrying out its activities.

² Bayan Nwihid Al-Hut, *Al-Qiyadat w-Al-Mua'assat As-Siyasiyyah fi Filistin 1917-1948* (The Political Leadership and Institutions in Palestine, 1917-1948). Beirut: Mua'ssasat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, p. 220.

³ Abdul Wahhab Kayyali, *Tarikh Filistin Al-Hadith* (The Truth About Palestine). Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasah Al-Arabiyyah Lid-Dirasat w-An-Nashr, 1985, p. 20.

⁴ *Filistin*, 19 December 1928.

Third, the national movement was to be re-arranged and restructured through creating political clubs and societies in each and every Palestinian town and city.⁵

All the activities and steps which the Executive Committee considered did not aid in improving its position within the national movement. In the late spring and the summer of 1929, the Executive Committee came under severe criticism. In his article dated May 1929, Ali Al-Gul expressed profound grief over the stagnant economic and political situation and the state of despair resulting from this regression, which was affecting the country. He attributed the mood of the nation to the absence of an active and serious political body. This body was supposed to act vigorously against laws enacted by the colonizers. These laws were, according to the author, inconsistent with the Mandate for Palestine, and the Palestinians did not accept them. Neither the Executive Committee nor the opposition constituted a reliable option.⁶

The convening of the Seventh Congress resulted from the pressure put by the written media on the Executive Committee. In this Congress, the two sides of the fence, the committee and the opposition, showed concern for individual interests. The tension between the two groups within the national movement molded the course of events within the Congress. Al-Gul accused the opposition of being puppets for the British. The Executive Committee, he continued, was patriotic and was growing similar to the opposition in its intention “to hold a youth conference in the search of appeasing the government.” Due to this situation, the author urged the jealous and patriotic youth not to decry themselves by the presence of an Executive Committee. Instead, they were supposed to rescue the country and preserve the nation’s dignity. Out of this conference, a new political party had to emerge. This party was supposed to be structured on a democratic basis, and its financial affairs must be well established.

An article in *Filistin* dated 28 May 1929 might shed light on the status of the national movement. In his editorial, the author stated that the Palestinians’ mistrust of the employee stratum should not lead the masses to total despair and lack of confidence in both the upper and lower social classes. The unity of these two classes would revive the declining national movement.⁷

⁵ *Filistin*, 18 April 1929.

⁶ *Filistin*, 16 May 1929.

⁷ *Filistin*, 28 May 1929.

The Palestinian leadership seemed to have lost hope for change. This state, according to the writer of the editorial, could be deduced from the writings of the various groups' newspapers. He also listed a number of indicators, which might have contributed to this despair. The stagnation of the national movement, the impaired Executive Committee, its inability to execute its decisions, and the favoring by some leaders of their own interests.⁸

According to the Jerusalem *Filistin* correspondent, Amin Al-Husseini, a secret meeting was held in Jerusalem. In attendance were Amin At-Tamimi, Mohammed Ali Al-Tamimi, Mui'n Al-Madi, Izzat Darwazih and Ahmad Al-Imam. They decided to form an underground party, which would later go public. Jamal Al-Husseini was nominated to become the secretary of the party after resigning his post in the Higher Islamic Council.

The party program was composed of the following concerns and aims:

First, Mui'n Al-Madi was to be appointed as a representative of Northern Palestine in the Higher Islamic Council.

Second, Amin At-Tamimi was to remain the representative of Nablus in the Council.

Third, Amin Ash-Shawwa must keep his post as a representative of the southern district in the Council.

Fourth, Amin Al-Husseini would remain the head of the Council, in addition to being the representative of both Jerusalem and Jaffa.

Fifth, the leadership considered launching a campaign against the government unless it approved the above listed appointees.

Sixth, each leader was supposed to work diligently in his district and utilize all needed means to push the approval of this law forward.⁹

While the traditional leaders were greatly concerned about leadership and the acceptance of prestigious posts in the Higher Islamic Council, the tension in Palestine between the Jews and the Palestinians was rising. Its initial breakout came in the form of a conflict in September of 1928 and reached its climax by August of 1929. The factors leading to the incidents of 1929, most notably the Wailing Wall conflict, can be traced back to the incidents occurring in Jerusalem on 24 September 1928 (Yom Kippur).

⁸ *Filistin*, 1 June 1929.

⁹ *Filistin*, 9 July 1929.

The early incidents started when the Jews decided to build a curtain between men and women during prayer in the Wailing Wall area. The Palestinians at that time considered that area Islamic property.

According to the Shaw Commission, the religious factor should not be overestimated when dealing with the incidents of 1929. The political factors were noticeably absent as well. In the period up to 1929, the steering national religious element had a very limited role in the growth of Arab enmity to the Jewish homeland.¹⁰ Contrary to the Shaw Commission's allegations, however, the conflict in Palestine and elsewhere in the Islamic world was, in fact, of a political nature rather than a religious one.

Zionism stimulated the renewal of the Palestinian people's ties with the land of Palestine. The Jewish immigration to and settlement in Palestine carried with it economic devastation for the Palestinians. Furthermore, the Palestinian movement by the late 1920s suffered a vacuum of true leadership. This led the masses to take the initiative and to lead the struggle by itself.

The Wailing Wall incidents of 1929 can be considered a watershed in the history of the Palestinian struggle with Zionism and the British as well as in the history of the Palestinian national movement itself. It marked the end of an era of active traditional leadership in the national movement and their policy. This leadership finally and totally alienated itself from the masses.

Amin Al-Husseini, by the end of September 1928, showed great enthusiasm to meet the government demands and exert greater control over the local written media.¹¹ Furthermore, in his speech before the masses at Damascus Gate on 23 August 1929, Amin Al-Husseini, the head of the Higher Islamic Council, called upon the people to disperse. He further insisted that the British Government was powerful, and it would protect the Palestinians from the danger posed by the Jewish. The British would also, he added, preserve Palestinian rights and holy places. He also restated this stand on the following day (the first day of the Wailing Wall incident) in his speech before the members of the Higher Islamic Council.¹²

On 24 August 1929, a number of the traditional leaders in Jerusalem issued a leaflet. In this leaflet they called upon the masses to keep calm. They demanded from the Palestinian Arabs to act faithfully to end the

¹⁰ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, p. 198-199.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

¹² Al-Hut, *op. cit.*, p. 230.

crisis and to stop bloodshed in order to preserve lives. This, in the view of the leaders, was in harmony with the interest of the nation and the country, which the Palestinians cared for. They stated that the British Government never discriminated against a specific group of people in terms of rights and responsibilities. It rather endeavored to meet security needs where each and every group was to execute its responsibilities. It said the British Government “does not single out the Arabs and shoot them down, but rather indiscriminately acts in accordance with preserving souls and lives.”¹³ The signatures of this leaflet were those of Amin Al-Husseini, Musa Kazim, Ragheb An-Nashashibi, Arif Ad-Dajani, Mahmoud Ad-Dajani, Ishaq Ash-Shihabi and Mustafa Al-Khalidi.

The declining status of the traditional leadership paved the way for the rise of the youth as a potential pioneering group within the national movement. The First and the Second Youth Congresses held in the years 1931 and 1932 respectively, and the attempts to transform the Congress into a political party were cases in point. The developments related to the traditional and the newly emerging young leadership presented challenges to the politics of the traditional leadership. The Wailing Wall incident demonstrated the fact that the struggle with the British comes along with fighting Zionism. The chances for a Jewish homeland to become a reality lay heavily on the shoulders of the British and their war machine. This state might explain the rise of an armed organization such as Al-Kaf Al-Akhdar gang in late 1929.¹⁴

The incidents of 1929 steered a great interest and concern in the surrounding Arab countries. They in fact brought to the fore the conflicting stands and interests between the regimes and the people. They further shed light on the differences between Arab masses the elite.

When the people of Transjordan heard the news about the incidents of 1929 in Palestine, they became greatly concerned about Palestine and its Arab inhabitants. They launched demonstrations in Amman and other Jordanian cities. It was reported that the inhabitants of Amman staged huge demonstrations, which the inhabitants of the surrounding towns and villages joined. Their destination was Prince Abdullah’s palace where they raised the Arab flag and chanted for the eternity of Palestine as an Arab country. A spokesman for Reuter’s news agency Hadithih Al-Khrishi stated that the Jews in Jerusalem attacked the Muslim holy places and violated the sanctity of Islam. Their offense against the Arabs could not be tolerated. He added, “Either die or live in indignity.” In fact, according

¹³ Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁴ Kayyali , op. cit., p. 219.

to the spokesman, they planned to receive the Prince's permission to march to Palestine for the purpose of aiding their Palestinian brothers. In response, the Prince pointed out that he believed that the government of Palestine was capable of preserving the Muslims' rights, and he would never accept the least offense launched against the Muslims. He said he was keeping up with the news, and in case he found an urgent need to aid the Palestinians, he would not hesitate for a moment to call upon the masses to offer help.¹⁵

The Wailing Wall incident marked a new and crucial turning point in the history of Palestinian national movement. It laid the bases for widening the gap between the diverse and rival groups in the Palestinian society, while it laid the foundation for class and group alliance in the next period. Furthermore, it put the struggle with both the British and the Zionists on a new road. It could be also be categorized as the initial step leading to the restructuring of the national movement and the breakout of the greater Palestinian uprising from 1936 to 1939.

THE ROAD TO CONFRONTATION

The period from 1929 to 1935 was critically formative in fomenting the Palestinian national uprising. The growing tensions in Europe also had great impact on the situation in Palestine. This unrest lead to an increase in Zionist immigration, which in turn severely burdened the Palestinian peasantry. Moreover, the British-Zionist relationship became more intimate which the Palestinian people must have perceived as immensely troubling. But while they all shared the same concerns, there was disagreement on how to deal with them.

Some Palestinians favored political action, while others pushed for armed struggle. While some endorsed negotiation, their neighbors preferred confrontation. This diversity can be understandable in terms of the varying class and political interests. And these embryonic formations in the state of rivalry would eventually lead to the outbreak of a wider national uprising.

The incidents of 1929 inspired the formation of the Al-Kaf Al-Akhdar gang. In other words, resorting to armed struggle became a reliable option. Al-Kaf Al-Akhdar was formed in October of 1929 under the leadership of Ahmad Itafish. During the month of its formation, it launched an offensive against the Jewish corner in Safad. It was aided by its supporters inside the city. In November this gang gained momentum. A number

¹⁵ *Filistin*, 2 September 1929.

of Druze who participated in the greater national uprising of Syria between 1925 and 1927 joined this gang, and in the short run, they became highly active figures in this organization. The gang launched another attack on the Jewish in Safad in mid-November. Consequently, the British army troops along with the Palestinian police to secure peace and security in Safad. In response, the members of this gang moved to Akka to prepare attacks against the British targets.

By December 1929, the British became more capable of dealing with the gang, especially after they had gathered enough troops in the area. The French also contributed to the elimination of this gang by limiting the mobility of the revolutionaries. The French used vehicles to patrol the Syrian frontiers with Palestine. Although the gang proved to be capable of managing and carrying out serious attacks on the British and the Zionists, and although they gained the emotional support of the local peasants, it could not deepen its roots and establish a well organized armed movement. Al-Kayyali attributes the failure of the gang to the lack of coordination and collaboration between its leadership and the traditional leadership.¹⁶

Although the traditional leadership could not be counted on, it opposed confrontation with the British and the Zionists. Political action had been its preferred means. Still preoccupied with preserving its leading role within the national movement, on Saturday and Sunday, 12 and 13 October 1929, the Executive Committee held a meeting. The members discussed major concerns like the status of the Al-Buraq area and the legal process concerning the issue of Al-Buraq and the incidents in Safad. By the end of the meeting the participants agreed on the following steps and measures to be considered. Also, plans to hold a general congress were made.¹⁷

The Palestinian traditional leadership continued to criticize the British policies. On 23 October 1929, the Executive Committee sent a telegraph to the British Government, the Foreign Office and the British papers. In this telegraph, the committee protested against the High Commissioner's domestic policy. Upon the return of the commissioner to Palestine after the Wailing Wall incidents, he issued a memo in which he presented several views of the Palestinian Arabs. The committee viewed this act as contemptible. He also financially aided Jewish institutions and individuals, while discriminating against Palestinians. He excluded Palestinian Arabs from the process, though the greater part of the government's money came from the Palestinians' taxes. His request for the British authority to help Jewish institutions and labor unions demonstrated, in the

¹⁶ Kayyali , op. cit., p. 220-221.

¹⁷ *Filistin*, 15 October 1929.

committee's view, a noticeable bias and hostility toward Palestinian Arabs. For the sake of preserving peace and stability, the Executive Committee urged the British Government and High Commissioner to adopt a balanced policy.¹⁸

The traditional leadership sought to identify itself with the concerns of the masses. A contrary stand would have further discredited the leadership. In January 1930, the Executive Committee harshly criticized the British Government of Palestine for discriminatory treatment of Palestinians. While the government savagely punished Palestinians, their counterparts, the Jews, were left free. While Arab men were sentenced to death after the Wailing Wall incidents, Zionists were perceived as blameless. In a pamphlet, the Executive Committee expressed a deep discontent and condemnation of the British policy. The committee, therefore, advised various political bodies and individuals to arm themselves with patience, which along with sacrifice, would accomplish the national aspirations.¹⁹

The traditional leadership still had faith in negotiation with the British, despite the increasingly bad conditions for workers and peasants, and the British refusal to install institutions of self-rule for the Palestinians. The Executive Committee was moved by the rise of the Labor Party to power in London. They sent a delegation. They hoped they could establish policy there, in hopes of deterring the possible breakout of violence and bloodshed back home.

Musa Kazim Al-Husseini headed the delegation, which included Amin Al-Husseini, Ragheb An-Nashashibi, Awni Abdul Hadi, Jamal Al-Husseini and Alfred Rock. This delegation intended to reach an understanding with the British. Their ultimate goal was to rid Palestine from Zionist domination, and consequently to make their politics more acceptable to the revolutionary elements in Palestine.

On 30 March 1930, the delegation arrived in London. On the following day it was received by both Ramsey MacDonald, the prime minister and Lord Passfield. The Palestinian leaders in the discussion demanded an end to the sale of Arab land to non-Arabs; Jewish immigration should be stopped. They further demanded the re-establishment of the Ottoman Bank. In the political arena the delegation requested the creation of a national

¹⁸ Akram Zu'aiter, *Watha'iq Al-Harakah Al-Wataniyyah Al-Filistiniyyah 1918-1939* (Palestinian National Movement Documents, 1918-1939). Beirut: Mua'ssasat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1st ed., 1979, p. 326.

¹⁹ *Filistin*, 22 January 1930.

parliamentary government in accordance with Article 22 of the United Nations Mandate for Palestine. The British replied, stressing a commitment to establish an administration in accommodation with the terms of the mandate system for Palestine. MacDonald and Passfield, promised to make a decision concerning the first two demands on the basis of Hope-Simpson's recommendations.

The British considered their discourse with the Palestinian delegation as being indifferent. The Palestinian leaders viewed their negotiation as fruitful. They could not admit failure, because their main concern was to strengthen their leadership role in the national movement.²⁰

The delegation's visit to London created a wide discussion within Palestinian circles. Conflicting views ranged from skepticism to support of the delegation. On one hand, some expressed disagreement with sending delegates to London, because this type of politics had already proved futile, and the money spent on such matters could be used to buy the land which was put on sale to the Jews. On the other hand, some demonstrated trust in the politics of the traditional leadership and backed the delegation enthusiastically.²¹

The delegation's visit to London resulted in the arrival of a commission headed by Hope-Simpson in Palestine. The recommendations made by this commission in its report to the British Government resulted in the issuing of the Passfield White Paper in October 1930. Despite the fact that this paper emphasized the commitment to implement the Zionist policy of a Jewish homeland as found in the mandate system for Palestine, the Palestinians received this paper with pleasure, because of its other components. Ahmad Ash-Shuqeiri pointed out that the reason behind receiving this paper of 1930 with joy was the fact that it spoke of the formation of a legislative council. It further conditioned the Jewish immigration and the sale of Arab land. These were not all the national demands, Ash-Shuqeiri continued, but it could be a step toward temporarily holding the Jewish influence at bay until the Palestinians could fight back and put a total end to it.²² It was evident that the Palestinians placed their hopes this paper, as the Executive Committee, for the first time, did not call for a general strike on the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration on 2 November 1930.

On 29 October 1930, the Executive Committee issued a pamphlet, which stated the following:

²⁰ Kayyali, op. cit., p. 222.

²¹ *Filistin*, 14 February.

²² Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 490-491.

“It still studies seriously the political scheme of His Majesty’s Government for Palestine... it does not consider declaration of a general strike on the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration this year... the Palestinians should not go on strike this time... it would be enough just to send a telegraph to the British in which the constant condemnation by the Arab *ummah* would be expressed.”

The student higher committee of that year, however, took charge of calling on all Arabs in and outside Palestine to go on a strike to express their denunciation of and strong opposition to the Balfour Declaration.

The Passfield White Paper of 1930 seemed to comfort the traditional leadership. In November 1930, the preparations for the General Islamic Congress began. Invitations were sent to Arab and Muslim *‘ulama* and permanent political figures by Amin Al-Husseini, head of the Higher Islamic Council and the Mufti of the Holy Land. In these invitations, the discuss the Muslims’ conditions at that time. main objectives of the Congress were highlighted. They intended to They were also to discuss means of preserving the holy places and to protect them from the dangers posed by enemies.²³

In December 1931, a General Islamic Congress was held in Jerusalem. The participants hoped to attract the world attention towards the Palestinian cause. Amin Al-Husseini, in association with Mawlana Shawkat Ali, was the spiritual force behind this movement. The Mufti Amin Al-Husseini perceived this Congress as a vehicle to consolidate the Palestinians’ position in relation to Zionism and the British Mandate. He further utilized this Congress to strengthen his leadership in Palestine and in the Islamic world.

The favorable contributions of this Congress to the status of the Mufti as leader stoked the Zionists’ anger. They also invoked the envy and reservations of his political opponents. While the Congress was in session, the Mufti’s opponents, especially those of An-Nashashibi’s faction who formed their own political party, tried to undermine him. For this purpose they called for holding another congress under the name of Mutamar Al-Ummah Al-Islamiyyah (The Congress of the Islamic Ummah).

The Mufti delivered the opening statement. He highlighted the status of Palestine in relation to the Islamic world. After two weeks of discourse, the conferees decided to form an Executive Committee for the Congress

²³ Ibid., p. 243-244.

along with branches in each Islamic country. They emphasized the holiness of Al-Aqsa Mosque and its surroundings, including Al-Buraq. The importance of Palestine for the Islamic world was again emphasized, and the Zionist and British plans condemned. They decided to establish an Islamic university under the name of the "University of Al-Aqsa Mosque." They further called for the formation of a company, which would be in charge of buying lands put for sale to the Zionists.

The Congress was deemed to be a failure from the Palestinian standpoint. The Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress suffered immensely because of the selfishness and carelessness of its members, who in turn converted it into an inactive honorary body. The Mufti, also in his tour of the Islamic world, intended to collect the needed money for the establishment of the Islamic University and the formation of the company.

The Islamic Congress included some Arab Nationalists of Al-Fatah and Al-'Ahd secret societies in addition to some Istiqlalists ("Independents") among the active participants. They were more pro-Arabism than pro-Islam. Therefore, they utilized the occasion of the Islamic Congress to discuss Arab affairs under colonial rule. They also put together a scheme for a coordinated effort. A day or two before the closing session of the Congress, fifty nationalists held a meeting in Awni Abdul Hadi's home where they formulated a nationalist charter.

In their document, the conference discussed the ramifications of the political fragmentation in the Arab World. They decided to resist the colonial domination of the Arab region and to attempt to accomplish total political independence for the region. They finally elected an Executive Committee. It was composed mainly of Palestinian figures, among whom were Izzat Darwazih, Awni Abdul Hadi, Subhi Al-Khadrah, 'Ajaj Nwihid, As'ad Dagir, Khair Ad-Din Az-Zarkali. This committee was required to issue the charter and make it accessible to the public. It had also to prepare for a general congress. The various Arab countries were to be represented in this congress, and the participants were to search for a means of implementing the adopted charter.²⁴

The Executive Committee sent invitations to prominent figures in various Arab countries. The invitations listed the issues of concern to be addressed in the discussion. The committee, in return, received very encouraging replies, and most replies included suggestions, schemes and some advice.

²⁴ Kayyali, op. cit., p. 232-233.

Iraq under the leadership of King Faisal Ibn Al-Hussein at that time held a prominent position among its Arab neighbors. Yasin Al-Hashimi, the famous Iraq politician, informed the committee that King Faisal was highly enthusiastic about holding the congress on Iraqi soil. The committee sent the delegation to meet with the king in order to discuss the matter with him personally. He welcomed holding the congress in Baghdad. He further stressed his readiness to have the participants of the congress free to decide just what they perceived to be in the interest of the *ummah*. In other words, he promised not to have any role in affecting the course of the conference and the decision making therein.

While confirming the attendees, the committee received a letter from Yasin Al-Hashimi in which he indicated his decision not to participate in the conference held in Baghdad. He sent copies of this letter to the committee branch in Jerusalem, and to the committee branch in Baghdad. He sent another to the Royal Palace. The conference, therefore, was postponed. It is worth noting that the British Ambassador in Baghdad informed the king about his opposition to having the congress in Baghdad. He said that the king and his government should distant themselves from this conference because Iraq was in the process of accomplishing independence and becoming a member in the League of Nations and should not burden itself with the problems of others. Domestic matters were of greater importance.²⁵

The move by King Faisal is understandable, particularly in terms of Hashemite devotion to the British and their policy in the region. Although Sharif Hussein was not in good health and did not possess any official position, he and Prince Abdullah held non-official talks with the Zionist leaders. In the later years of his life, Kisch discussed with the king, the Prince and the prime minister Hasan Abu Al-Huda the means through which the Zionists and the Jordanians could utilize the economic resources of Transjordan. Both the king and his son agreed with the Zionists on the terms of cooperation. According to Kisch, the king commanded his son Prince Abdullah to always honor his relations with the Zionists. He was also supposed to build bridges of friendship between the two people. In response, Prince Abdullah offered an implicit recognition of the Zionists' right for the Jewish homeland in Palestine. The Hashemite leaders did not consider this early visit with the Zionists as final, but they invited Dr. Weizmann to visit Amman, where they all would have satisfactory and fulfilling arrangements with Zionists.

²⁵ Mohammed Izzat Darwazih, *Al-Qadiyyah Al-Filistiniyyah fi Mukhtalaf Marahilha* (The Palestinian Question and Its Different Stages). Sayda and Beirut: Al-Maktaba Al-Asrih, 1st ed., 1909, pp. 87-91.

They, therefore tried to renew earlier contacts and negotiations with the Zionists. Weizmann's visit to Jerusalem in March 1931 came as an opportunity for the Hashemites to put their ties with the Zionists on the right track. They, therefore launched a political talk. The news of this invitation reached the ears of the public. Their anger came through demonstrations in the streets of major cities. They chanted slogans calling for the death of Zionism and its collaborators in the country. It was also a golden opportunity for the political opposition in Jordan to criticize Prince Abdullah and his cabinet. The Prince, in response, submitted explanations to the Jewish agency concerning the action of the people, and he postponed the invitation. He then visited Jerusalem the following month where he presented the Jewish Agency with an apology for the second time. He also openly blamed the political opposition for Jordan's missing out on the benefits to be had from cooperation with Zionism, especially in the field of investment. He promised that he would put an end to the activities of the opposition. His father would consequently hold a meeting with Weizmann in Amman.

However, his wish could not materialize, because Sharif Hussein had died during the first week of June 1931. The Zionists mourned the king, and a Zionist delegation headed by Kisch participated in the funeral. Jacob Mair, the grand rabbi and a friend of both King Hussein and Prince Abdullah was part of that delegation.²⁶ Needless to point out, in this respect Prince Abdullah's promises to the Jordanian masses was an attempt to halt their aid to the Palestinians at the time of the Al-Buraq incidents.

In the period under study, the leadership of the Arab liberation movement as represented by the Hashemites could not live up to its commitments before the Arab and Palestinian masses, as was mentioned earlier. The Palestinians were alone in the struggle with Zionism. While the Executive Committee was out of steam, the traditional leadership was still present and active in the political arena in Palestine. But the arena was characterized by little more than the holding of congresses.

On 26 October 1929, the Arab Women's Congress was held in Jerusalem. An estimated 300 women representing various parts of Palestine participated in this Congress. The conferees expressed a total opposition to the Balfour declaration and to the Jewish immigration into Palestine. They endorsed independence for Palestine, and the formation of a parliamentary government. Moreover, they emphasized the need for women's activism and for widening women's role in moving events in general and in

²⁶ Anis As-Sayigh, *Al-Hashimiyun wa Qadiyat Filistin* (The Hashemites and the Palestinian Question). Sayda: Mansurat Jaridat Al-Muharrir w-Al-Maktaba Al-Masriyyah, 1966, p. 127.

bringing about women's emancipation and renaissance in particular. In the economic field, these women encouraged the need for further economic and commercial development. They also supported strengthening economic and commercial ties between Palestine and Syria and other neighboring Arab countries. After the women had ended the discussions in their meeting, a women's peaceful and silent demonstration took place in Jerusalem, where women formed a motorcade of 80 cars to pass through the streets of the city. Their action was a protest of the British High Commissioner's policy.

This Congress could be viewed as the initial step for the takeoff of the women's movement in 20th-Century Palestine. The Arab Women's Union, which has channeled Palestinian women's activism since its inception, can be seen as the ultimate product of that Congress. The fact that the traditional leadership headed the Palestinian national movement, and the A'yan wives led the women's movement in 1929, probably established a line between women's activism as a feminist cause and her role within the national movement. Their involvement also pointed up the class distinctions within the movement.

On Thursday, 14 November 1929, the Palestinian bourgeoisie, who benefited from commercial exchange with Zionists, held its congress in Haifa. The bourgeoisie from various parts of Palestine were represented in the Congress through the participation of 45 members. Nimer An-Nabulsi was chosen as chairman. Rashid Al-Haj Ibrahim, also in attendance, was one of the wealthiest merchants of Haifa. Hasan Sadiqi Ad-Dajani and Tawfiq Az-Zayba were selected as secretaries. They protested against the trade protectionism of Zionist goods like cement and other items. They decided to establish a company with capital of one hundred thousand British pounds. This was designed to make the industries of commerce and agriculture flourish. They demanded the establishment of an agrarian bank, in addition to the completion of an Egypt-Palestine Bank project. Politically the conferees supported the political ends which the Palestinians committed themselves to accomplishing. Two telegraphs were sent by the Congress, one to the High Commissioner, and the other to the Shaw Commission. In these telegraphs they demanded the cancellation of the Balfour Declaration policy. The participants in this conference committed themselves under oath to work for achieving these goals and to boycott the Zionists' goods.²⁷

From 12 to 14 August 1930 a Students' Congress was convened in Akka. It embodied the newly emerging trend in Palestine. The young intellectu-

²⁷ Kamil Mahmoud Khillih, *Filistin w-Al-Intidab Al-Biritani 1922-1929* (Palestine and the British Mandate 1922-1929). Tripoli, Libya: Al-Mua'ssah Al-Arabiyyah Lin-Nashr w-At-Tawzia', 1974, p. 472-473.

als, who were immensely frustrated over the discredited politics of congresses holding negotiations with the British, began to challenge this failing leadership. The conferees first and foremost decided to form a scout movement in Palestine independent from that of Lord Robert Baden-Powell. This movement had an effective role within the Palestinian resistance movement after 1933. They also decided to boycott foreign goods and to buy and encourage purchase of national products. The participants in the Congress demanded that the Palestinian Department of Education install the teaching of Arab history and geography as required parts of the curriculum approved for high schools. They also elected the Higher Students' Committee.²⁸

In attempt to undermine the role of the students' committee in relation to the memorial three martyrs, forty days after their martyrdom on 27 July, the Executive Committee issued a call to the nation on 19 August 1930. In this call the committee requested that the masses go on a peaceful strike on land and sea on Saturday, 23 August 1930, in remembrance of the martyrdom of 120 persons in the year since the Al-Buraq incident on 23 August 1929. Muslims were to hold noon-hour prayers in the mosques, while Christians were to choose the proper time for holding prayers in remembrance of the martyrs. More importantly, the committee appealed for the masses to show their love for peace and care for order on the day of the strike.

The masses did not receive the committee call with enthusiasm. The people called upon the committee to change its established traditional politics, which had a record of failure. Their disaffection of the stand adopted by the committee also stemmed from the fact that the country was still under the impact of an economic recession, and the sale of Arab lands to the Zionists was still in effect. In other words, the fear of a Jewish homeland in Palestine still haunted them.

On 26 August 1930 at 10:00 a.m., Musa Kazim and Umar Afandi As-Salih met with Davis, the acting High Commissioner. On the occasion of the strike, they protested against the commissioner's biased policy conducted by the government. They highly resented the government's reluctance to help the Arabs accomplish their goal of independence. They also protested the move by some officers who broke into the committee headquarters and confiscated its leaflet.²⁹

²⁸ Ibid., p. 486.

²⁹ *Filistin*, 13 and 26 August 1939.

The rivalry between the traditional, declining old and the new, emerging young leadership became widely evident and colored the course of events in the period concerned. On 4 January 1932, the First Youth Congress was held in Jaffa. Issa Al-Bandak headed this Congress. Two hundred members out of four hundred representatives attended the meeting. This Congress could be characterized as being neither ideologically inspired nor limited to a single issue, but it was rather open for the discussion of a range of concerns and subjects. The Youth Congress laid the bases for forming active committees in compliance with the constitutional ground.

Among these committees was a committee on national education, which took charge of raising the level of literacy as well as the educational and moral levels in the country. The committee did not consider building new schools, because this task required tremendous funds. It also did not try to put pressure on the Palestinian Department of Education because it lacked the leverage as an executive body to accomplish the wanted change. The committee encouraging national trade took the responsibility of organizing exhibits for national goods, boycotting foreign theaters and arranging with the newspapers the prohibition of advertising Zionists goods.

In the political sphere the Congress adopted a nationalist charter in which they considered the Arab World as a single unit. They also rejected colonization in principle. Furthermore, they called for a unified effort by all Arab countries to achieve an Arab independence. In the economic field, the Congress laid the basis for the establishment of the Al-Ummah Fund and defined its legal and administrative functions.

Out of this Congress, an elected Executive Committee of thirty-eight members emerged, and Rasim Al-Khalidi was elected unanimously to chair the committee. He was a university graduate who also highly valued the role of youth in politics. He, along with Fu'ad Saba, an accountant, established the fund. They toured each city and village to lecture on the benefits of the fund and encouraged people to pay their share in the project. This was the initial step for the establishment of the Al-Ummah Fund, which Ahmad Hilmi later headed.

The Executive Committee for the Congress called its active committees, Jam'iyyat Ash-Shubban Al-'Arab (the Arab Youth Societies). The role of the committee was mainly to carry out those decisions and measures considered by the Arab Youth Congress, especially in terms of supervising the Boy Scouts units and the Al-Ummah Fund.

Due to financial difficulties, the activities of the Youth Congress were limited to the field of sport, Boy Scouts and economics. It could be credited for informing the people on the dangers of the Zionist Exhibition,

which the Zionists prepared for and in which they encouraged the participation of all Arab establishments. On 5 March 1932, Rasim Al-Khalidi issued a call, which stated the following:

“Since they ended through organizing this exhibit to deceive the people and to portray themselves as being for the progress and the well being of the country, the Executive Committee of the First Arab Youth Congress decided to boycott the exhibit.”³⁰

Consequently, Musa Kazim issued a leaflet on 1 March 1932 in which he called for boycotting the exhibition.

In an attempt to counter the Zionist Exhibition, the Palestinians decided to organize their own exhibition. They prepared themselves, and on 7 July 1933, the exhibition was held in the Palace Hotel, which was owned by the Department of the Islamic Waqf. It was important, due to the wide range of goods exhibited, in addition to a wide participation by various Syrian countries.

The First Youth Congress succeeded to a certain extent in halting the sale of land to the Zionists, due to its success, along with the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress, in creating a Palestinian National Fund. It further succeeded in refreshing and refueling the Boy Scouts movement.

The youth held their Second Congress in Haifa on 10 May 1935. The participants in the Congress exceeded a thousand persons. They had a thorough and extensive discussion in which they decided on several socioeconomic and political matters related to the Palestinian people. They, in affect, shouldered themselves with a heavy burden, which the state could not bear. At that time they neither possessed the needed resources to carry out their plans nor did they have the power needed to pressure the government.³¹ Yet they persevered.

All political figures and groups in this period seemed to have been greatly concerned about the revival of the national movement and the failure of the Executive Committee, which brought about a lame duck national movement. Renewal of the nationalist endeavor required a new stand toward the British. Several earlier meetings between the Istiqlalists and the Majlisis were held. The discussion centered on the Istiqlalists' call for fighting the British and being more open in their hostile stand toward the

³⁰ *Al-Jam'iyyah Al-Arabiyyah*, 6 March 1932. Issue number 778.

³¹ Al-Hut, op. cit., pp. 257-267.

British. The disagreement of the two groups resulted from the Majlisis' interest in maintaining friendly ties with the British.

The Istiqlalists consequently decided to break away and form their own party. Among the early founders of the party were, Mu'in Al-Madi, Izzat Darwazih, Awni Abdul Hadi, Subhi Al-Khadrah, Rashid Al-Haj Ibrahim, Akram Zu'aitir, Fahmi Al-Abushi, Dr. Salim Salamih and 'Ajaj Nwihid. They all decided on the major principles for the new party. These principles were in agreement with the Istiqlal and Al-Fatah Parties.

In its Congress in December 1931, the Istiqlalists, formulated a charter in which the achievement of Arab unity and rejection of political fragmentation were top priority. Palestine was to be treated always as part of greater Syria. They called for carrying out strong actions to terminate the mandate system and the Balfour Declaration. Furthermore, they emphasized the priority of forming an independent Arab rule. They added to the agenda of the party a statement indicating that the party members were prohibited from utilizing the party for individual or family good. They were rather supposed to cooperate for the good of the nation and the party. They did not consider having a chairman for the party, but instead, the party had a secretary. This party was announced to the public in July of 1932.³²

In the period under focus, several political parties were formed after the Istiqlal Party. Their formation came along family lines. They imbedded the family politics, which characterized the Palestinian politics in that period. The failure of Ragheb An-Nashashibi in the mayoral election in Jerusalem in 1934 upset the balance of power between the two prominent families in Jerusalem, the Al-Husseini and An-Nashashibi families, established since 1920. An-Nashashibi's bitterness over his failure to win the election coincided with the rising leadership of Al-Haj Amin Al-Husseini.

In addition to this turn of events, the death of Musa Kazim Al-Husseini in 1934 from wounds inflicted by the British police during his participation in the uprising put an end to the Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress. Its disappearance marked the end of a unifying body within the national movement. Moreover, it created a vacuum. Consequently, each family tried to form its political party to represent its own interests within the Palestinian national movement and political arena.

³² Darwazih, *op. cit.*, pp. 103-104.

In December 1934 the Ad-Difa' Party representing the interests of the An-Nashashibi family was the first party to be formed after Jerusalem's mayoral elections. Ragheb An-Nashashibi chaired this party. Four months later, a new party, Al-Arabi (the Palestinian Arab Party) under the leadership of Jamal Al-Husseini, a prominent supporter of Amin Al-Husseini, came into being.

The Ad-Difa' Party included among its ranks traditional leading mayors. They all committed themselves to the accomplishment of independence for Palestine, which also presumed Arab rule. They also decided not to recognize any international treaty, which might lead to a foreign influence upon or domination over the country. The Al-Arabi Party meanwhile, had its own branches in various parts of the country. It was more frank in its declaration with respect to fighting both the Zionists and the Mandate power. Contrary to the Ad-Difa' Party, the Al-Arabi Party stood firm on the issue of achieving Arab unity and putting an end to the sale of land to the Zionists.³³

In March 1935 the founders of the Al-Arabi Party, Jamal Al-Husseini, Alfred Rock, Farid Al-Anabtawi, Ibrahim Darwih, Sheikh Mohammed Ali Al-Jabari, and Yusuf Diay' Ad-Dajani, got together. By the end of this meeting, the participants issued a declaration stating the *ummah* wished for resuming Al-Jihad (a holy war). This was achieved through the rise of a new political organization, which would insure the *ummah* consistency and seriousness in action. It would gather all needed power to defend the threatened existence of the *ummah*. It would organize its affairs and utilize all efforts for the public good. The Al-Arabi Party was therefore formed. This formative conference was held in Jerusalem on 27 March 1935. Its formation was based on the established principles which the *ummah* committed itself to achieving from the very moment of its national struggle, i.e. working for an independence of the country within the context of Arab unity, in addition to terminating the Mandate order and the Zionist threat.³⁴

A month later, the Second Youth Congress was convened. The discussions of the Congress centered on bringing about improvements in social and economic life. They also considered ruling the youth in the clubs and various youth organizations. This was designed to increase the efficacy of the youth rule in resisting Zionism. In this Congress the youth seemed to have attempted to transform their Congress into a political party with Yaqoub Al-Qussain arising as its chairman.

³³ Kayyali, op. cit., pp. 247-248.

³⁴ Khillih, op. cit., pp. 573-274.

Right before the start of 1935, two parties surfaced, the Al-Isla'h Party, chaired by Dr. Hussein Fakhri Al-Khalidi and the Al-Kutlah Al-Wataniyyah (National Block) Party, under the leadership of Abd Al-Latif Salah, a prominent attorney in Nablus. The stands of these two political parties were similar to those of the Al-Arabi Party.³⁵

The rise of these political parties reflected the seriousness of the rift along family and class lines within the national movement. While the formation of these political parties was inspired by the gradual decline of the Executive Committee, the political parties themselves acted as competing forces to the Executive Committee attempting to become the leading body of the national movement. Needless to say, these parties in generated more criticism at a very critical period, and more importantly, they were instrumental in the breakout of the General Strike of 1936 along with the formation of the Arab Higher Committee.

While the uprisings of 1929 and 1936 had some impact on the national leadership in Palestine, family and class interests continued to be of paramount concern. In 1930, Amin Al-Husseini was preoccupied with consolidating his leading position. This leadership was in harmony with the British colonial interests. He did not criticize the British colonial role or policy in Palestine. Al-Husseini rather limited his condemnation to the British-Zionist politics. He also proposed the formation of parliamentary government in which both Arabs and Jews were represented. In a letter Chancellor sent to the British Minster of Colonial Affairs dated 12 October 1930, he stated that Mufti Amin Al-Husseini committed himself to the maintenance of order and the collaboration with the British. His attitude, the chancellor added, was well established. The lack of British concern over his suggestion of compliance would not change his stand.³⁶

The British trusted Mufti Amin Al-Husseini and considered him a reliable tool to bringing about peace and stability. They therefore signed a temporary arrangement with the Higher Islamic Council granting temporal control over the financial affairs and transactions of the Islamic Waqf institution. This move by the British was aimed at rewarding the Mufti for putting an end to Arab riots against the British. Al-Husseini's conduct in mid-January 1934 inspired the British to transform the earlier stated arrangement from a temporary to a permanent one.³⁷

³⁵ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

³⁶ Khillih, *op. cit.*, pp. 468.

³⁷ Kayyali, *op. cit.* p. 244.

It is important to know that the Mufti asked the head of the department of criminal investigation to provide him with a number of policemen. They were to act as his bodyguards. He also obtained an anti-bullet coat to defend against assassination attempts. He went further to establish a military organization. According to Emile Al-Guri, after the incidents of October and November of 1933, the Mufti formed an armed organization under the name of Al-Jihad Al-Muqaddas. This organization for holy war was headed by Abdul Qadir Al-Husseini. In addition to this, the Mufti kept in constant contact with Al-Sheikh 'Izz Ad-Din Al-Qassam. According to Subhi Yasin's writings, Al-Qassam sent one of his followers, Mahmoud Salim, to the Mufti. Salim had a message in which Al-Qassam called upon the Mufti to start a revolution in the southern part of Palestine. At the same time, Al-Qassam was to instigate one in the north. In response, the Mufti asserted that he preferred the utilization of political means over the adoption of revolutionary steps.³⁸

In general one may suggest that the traditional leadership in Palestine was inclined to maintain a friendly relationship with the British, dictated by their interests. British High Commissioner Wauchope in Palestine in 1932, adopted the policy of appointing the sons of the traditional families of both the Majlis and the opposition to governments posts. He appointed most of them in middle and lower ranking positions and a few in high posts. The commissioner attempted to use these appointments as leverage to keep the traditional leaders collaborating with the government. Some figures in the Palestinian national movement and importantly some prominent active members from the defunct Executive Committee were receptive to this policy.

Furthermore, they very often accepted the commission invitations to attend receptions and dinner parties. On these occasions they sat side by side with Zionist leaders. They also accepted to serve on various consultative committees dealing with labor, commercial, and agricultural concerns. Those leaders vigorously defended and justified their participation in these committees. They rationalized them as being of great use to the Arabs and their just cause. They did so especially after the High Commissioner had indicated before the Mandates Commission that the Arab participation in the government activities, especially in these committees, constituted vital steps towards an eventual cooperation with the government. In early 1933, the Executive Committee called upon all national leaders and active members who participated in these committees to terminate their relationship with government due to the fact that the British opened Palestine for waves of Jewish immigration. Some leaders stayed

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 250-251.

on to the extent that they declared preference for participation with these committees and collaboration with the government over membership on the Executive Committee.³⁹

In spite of the collaborationist tendencies maintained by some figures in the national movement, the traditional leadership in Palestine generally shifted its stand on the issue of British Zionist politics. This shift might come about as a result of the pressure mounted on the leadership. The diversity of politics within the national movement and the competing political factions must have stimulated a change in the approach held by the traditional leaders. The rising intimacy of the British relationship with the Zionists also must have contributed to the newly adopted stand by the leadership.

In early 1931, the British Government issued the Black Letter, which Prime Minister J. MacDonald submitted to Chaim Weizmann, the head of the Jewish Agency. While the White Paper of October 1930 dealt with the issue of land and Jewish immigration, the Black Letter remanded the White Paper, and gave the Jews additional political and social rights, which were not possessed earlier. In response to this letter, the Executive Committee issued a pamphlet, which rejected both the White Paper and the Black Letter:

Our Executive Committee has never been fully satisfied with all things considered in the mentioned White Paper. The promises of the British Government did not then deceive us, especially when it came to the issues of land and immigration. The White Paper did not contain new things with respect to the Arab political rights. The texts and the principles included in the paper regarding the Arab economic and social rights do not guarantee the Arabs their national rights and economic interests. The texts and the principles do not stand important by themselves, but rather through their execution. We are confident that all Arabs and civilized people all over the world view this new document, the 'Black Letter,' as a new defiance of the promises which the British Government, on behalf of the British people, committed itself to Arabs and before the League of Nations.⁴⁰

At the time of the Arab masses' support of the Palestinian national movement, delegations came from Amman and As-Salt to Nablus. The Executive Committee rushed to present strongly in an attempt to negate the held notion of its declining status.

³⁹ Darwazih, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

⁴⁰ *Filistin*, Friday, 20 February 1931.

Consequently, the committee called for the convening of a General Arab Congress. It was held on 18 September 1931 in Nablus. In this Congress Jamal Al-Husseini, a secretary of the executive committee, considered that the scheme adopted by the nation up to that point had proved impotent. He, therefore, called for the assessment of either one of two other schemes. The Palestinians could utilize a scheme that was theoretically negative and practically positive, similar to the scheme which the Egyptians adopted. They also could employ a scheme both theoretically and practically negative, similar to that employed by the Indians.

Al-Husseini further indicated that as long as the British directly administered the country, the politics of Arab collaboration with the government would prove a failure, which happened to be the case in the 13 years preceding the occupation. The Executive Committee and other national bodies had to take this fact into account. They should negotiate with the British on the basis of the demand for the independence of Palestine within an Arab country. They could utilize all political and economic projects, which would lead to accomplishing independence.⁴¹

The year 1931 was crucial to the Palestinian leadership's relationship with the British. By this year the British got closer to the Zionists due to the rising importance of Palestine to the British interests.

The production of Iraqi oil and the need to pump it into the Mediterranean ports in Palestine might explain the increasing British concern with their allies. Their arming of the Jewish settlers in this context was not surprising. But this action by the British was of great concern to the Palestinian leadership.

Al-Jam'iyah Al-Arabiyyah Al-Wataniyyah (The National Arab Society) called for a congress in Nablus to discuss matters related to the arming of Jewish settlers. This society had replaced the dissolved Islamic Christian Society in Nablus on 13 April 1931. Mohammed Izzat Darwazih was its main figure. This society included among its ranks those ex-members of the previous Islamic Christian Society in addition to other prominent elements in the national movement. They were estimated at 180 members. At the front of the demonstrations, in which the people came out expressing their protest against the government's policy of arming the Zionists, were the members of the Executive Committee. They did not intend to submit well-defined demands, but rather to express their anger

⁴¹ Al-Hut, *op. cit.* pp. 256-257.

and protest against the British deviance in their conduct from a well-established base of jurisprudence and fairness.⁴²

In his letter to the British High Commissioner dated 29 June 1931, Musa Kazim Al-Husseini, chairman of the Executive Committee, resented the British arming of the Jews. He indicated that the British, who promised the Arabs independence in exchange for the Arabs' share in the World War I, caused the Arabs pain, grief and despair. They were saddened by the damages inflicted by the British in their country. Furthermore, the British act of arming the Zionists increased their resentment and discontent. They perceived the British as bringing and preparing intruders to kill the Palestinian people. The British seemed unsatisfied with killing Palestinians politically, he added, their main concern seemed to be the "extermination of the Palestinians." Therefore, he concluded, "we, the Palestinian people, behave in genuine protest to this outrageous act. We declare to all people that the government should shoulder all the responsibilities resulting from this act."⁴³

The speed of developments in Palestine placed great pressure on the leadership to act diligently and effectively. The rise of the Nazis to power in Germany triggered a massive Jewish immigration to Palestine. This obviously created pressure on land habitation and employment levels, which worsened the condition of life in Palestine. On a psychological level, this immigration raised the Palestinian concern over the fate of the country. And the more the British disregarded of the protests carried out by the leadership, the less credibility they had among themselves and with the people they represented. The leadership was obliged to act quickly and steadily to bring about some sort of change.

In early 1933 a meeting was held and attended by both Amin Al-Husseini and Ragheb An-Nashashibi and others. The attendees demanded to abandon the policy of collaboration with the government altogether. The attendees also agreed that a delegation be sent to the British High Commissioner to ask the commissioner to put an end to Jewish immigration to Palestine and the sale of Palestinian land to Jewish hands. However, unlike previous calls, this one came as an ultimatum. The British Government was to act within a one-month period, and if the government did not meet their demands, the Arabs were determined to end all collaborationist activities with them.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 255.

⁴³ Zu'a'itir, *op. cit.*, p. 356.

The British did not positively respond to the delegation's demand. By the end of the month, the Executive Committee decided to call for holding another meeting in Jaffa to study the state of affairs in Palestine. By the end of March 1933 the meeting was held. It was attended by a great number of Palestinian leaders including the Majlisis and the opposition. They discussed non-collaboration. The anti-Istiqlalists proposed a gradual abandonment of collaboration with the British starting with their boycott of receptions and parties and leading up to the resignation of Arab civil servants in the government of Palestine.

Meanwhile, the opposition leaders, namely Asim As-Said and Ragheb An-Nashashibi, suggested an immediate end to collaboration with the British. They expressed a willingness to resign from their posts on the condition that the Mufti also be ready to resign from his post as head of the Higher Islamic Council. The Mufti obviously rejected the proposal, which brought party politics and family and class conflicts back into full swing. The opposition leader rushed back to collaboration, and the Majlisis followed suit.⁴⁴

Regardless of existing differences among various factions within the national movement, the issue of Zionist drift into Palestine usually united them. The increasing influence of Jewish immigrants to Palestine by 1933 resulting from the rise of Nazi Germany to power immensely troubled the Palestinian leadership. It could be said that Zionist successes might have been perceived as the embodiment of the leadership's pronounced failure to deliver on their commitment before the Palestinian masses.

In its meeting in early September 1933, the Executive Committee discussed what could be done to counter the waves of Jewish immigrants. The members of the committee also studied the means and measures to be taken in the search for restoring and strengthening the committee. On this occasion Jamal Al-Husseini called for staging a general demonstration. The attendants were enthused by Al-Husseini's idea. They consequently decided on Friday, 13 September as the day for the first demonstration, which was to take place in Jerusalem. All members of the committee, in addition to other national leaders and activists of different political and ideological colors came all together.

On Friday, 13 September 1933, a general demonstration took place in Jerusalem. According to Darwazih, this demonstration was huge. Needless to say, it was strong in both size and spirit, and there were participants who were rarely seen in such actions. This demonstration came as a serious act and a major step in placing pressure on the government to change

⁴⁴ Darwazih, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

their policies. It was a challenge to the government as it was seen as an act disobedient to its laws and regulations. Surprisingly, it constituted a drift of the traditional leaders' stand toward radicalism. The masses were greatly awed at seeing the traditional leaders united and participating in a demonstration planned against the wishes and concerns of the British. The people had always witnessed these leaders as part of negotiating delegations, receptions and congresses as political opponents to one another.⁴⁵

In the fall of 1933 a state of despair from the government's reluctance to meet the Palestinians' demands enfolded country. The Executive Committee in Jerusalem considered a call for protest in a meeting held by the Istiqlalists Awni Abdul Hadi, Azza' Darwazih, Mui'n Al-Madi, Rashid Al-Haj Ibrahim and Fahmi Al-Aboushi. The Istiqlalist members on the Executive Committee decided to boycott the meetings of the committee. They believed that the leadership in the Executive Committee would never be moved towards adopting strong stands when it came to the government, because the committee was formed of defuse political and ideological interests. The Istiqlalist in turn began to discuss the most reliable means to put pressure on the government and to challenge its discriminating conduct. They had either to call for staging a demonstration and disobeying the government's laws and regulations or for going on civil disobedience.

They were uncertain, however, of how their actions might be taken, not only by the masses, but by the Majlisis and the opposition. The Istiqlalists had received the news of the 13 September demonstration with enthusiasm. On this count, they enjoyed solidarity with the Executive Committee.⁴⁶

By 1933, the situation in Palestine had become increasingly tense. The general mood by then had dramatically shifted toward confrontation with the British. The diligent work by the youth organization in preparation for activating a struggle with the government fueled the tense and exploding situation. Near the Port of Jaffa the women's delegation was so courageous in confronting the High Commissioner, that their husbands joined the crowd. In addition to delegations from different parts of Syria and Transjordan, the demonstration in Jaffa attracted over seven thousand participants armed with sticks. As a result of the confrontation a policeman was killed, and 25 policemen were wounded. At the same time, 12 demonstrators were killed, 78 were wounded, and tens of them were young leaders in the national movement.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁶ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 277.

The results of the confrontation triggered further violence. When news of the police authority reached the ears of the masses, the whole country went on a strike and widespread violence broke out in Jaffa and Nablus. On the following day the police installed checkpoints on several streets of Jaffa. The railway station and the police opened fire randomly on the masses. Tens of them were wounded. As a result, the government imposed a curfew on the city and shut down its port for three days. Safad, Nazarit, and Tulkarem were occupied by British troops from 28 October. This obviously did not deter people from demonstrating and throwing rocks at the soldiers. In Akka, Assad Ash-Shuqeiri, used his influence to prevent another demonstration from taking place. In Nablus, the tension reached critical proportions. No violence, however, occurred due to the efforts of the mayor. The ruler of the district appreciated the mayor's role in preventing violence. In Al-Hawarith Valley, the British jet fighters eliminated the chances of disturbances breaking out. The Jerusalemites curiously awaited the news of Safad. Some young men from Nablus came to Jerusalem where they visited the leaders who had just come from Jaffa.

In the following day, 29 October, stores were closed, while crowds of angry Palestinians gathered and stoned the British police. At night, fire shooting was carried out by the Palestinians. They targeted the British camp and the house of the mayor.

The Palestinians also attacked the police with hand grenades. In some areas the police opened fire on the masses, incurring casualties and great suffering on the crowds. The tension escalated with the rising number of dead and wounded civilians. The Palestinians began fire shooting again at the British army and offices. The closure of Arab stores continued which suggested the strike was still in place. In protest of the government measures, the Arabic newspapers were not issued. The general strike continued until 3 November, when the Executive Committee called for an end.⁴⁷

Dealing with the incidents in Jaffa represented a valuable opportunity for the committee and the traditional leadership to consolidate their role in vanguarding the national movement. In its leaflet dated 28 October 1933, the Executive Committee condemned the harsh acts, which the government committed against unarmed people.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 241-242.

⁴⁸ Zu'aitir, op. cit., pp. 380-381.

The Executive Committee also sent another letter to the High Commissioner in Palestine dated 13 October 1933. In this letter the committee protested against the atrocious conduct of the police at the time of the Jerusalem incidents.

In the letter the committee condemns lawless, uncivilized actions taken by the police. Moreover, the police having prevented medical doctors from executing their duties in treating wounded persons was considered outrageous.⁴⁹

The British concern over their interests as well their Zionist commitments was the impetus behind their atrocities. In addition to suffering politically and being deprived of rights of identity and independence, they also came under increased economic pressures. By 1934, the impact of the world economic crisis of 1929 to 1932 compounded the already strained economic situation caused by the Jewish settlers. The Palestinians, therefore, were under pressure to sell their land to the Jews. This situation constituted a fertile environment for violence.

The sale of land to Jews became a more profitable business. This triggered a campaign by the journalists. They harshly criticized this as an act of treason. They went so far as to publish the names of the sellers in the local journals. This problem directed the people's attention toward the Mufti in search of a proper solution. The Mufti was not interested in the use of violence at that time as a means to remedy the situation. He instead decided to reach their minds and hearts as a means of persuasion and emotional influence by speaking of religious conviction.⁵⁰

The failure of the traditional leadership to deliver on its promises before the masses seemed not to have transformed their stand to a more radical and revolutionary one. The Executive Committee, which they had used as a vehicle to channel their political activism, vanished, as mentioned before, as a result of the death in 1934 of its chairman Musa Kazim from wounds inflicted by police in the Jerusalem demonstration of 1933. Moreover, the formation of political parties begun in 1934 to replace the Executive Committee did not provide the proper answer. It rather deepened the rift within the society on family and political issues. This came at the time when the situation in Palestine was destined toward more violence and revolution.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

⁵⁰ Al-Hut, *op. cit.*, pp. 293-294.

Leadership, therefore, was indispensable. The leaders in Palestine in search for alternatives decided to form a commission called Lajnit Al-Ahزاب (a Committee of the Parties). It was designed to replace the disappearing Executive Committee, creating a political body, which would represent the Palestinians domestically and before regional and international representatives and institutions. The Istiqlal Party did not join this commission.⁵¹

Although the formation of this commission was designed to bring about unity within the national movement and a consolidation of the traditional leaders' status, it did not necessarily succeed. The political parties formed in Palestine were in disagreement over the means and methods considered for resolving the Palestinian cause. Moreover, the people would no longer adhere to traditional policies, but rather resorted to violence. An uprising seemed to them the proper road.

The situation in Palestine by 1935 became increasingly tense. Various segments and groups within the Palestinian society shifted relatively to more radicalism. In the meeting held in Nablus dated 2 November 1935 on the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, delegations representing various towns as well as non-governmental Palestinian institutions gathered. Delegations from Arab countries participated too. The participants delivered speeches and received telegraphs. They also adopted decisions, one of which was deemed to be highly important. It emphasized the conferees' belief that Britain was responsible for the critical point, which Palestine had reached.

They also declared that the British conspired with the Zionists to achieve the extermination of the Palestinians. All hostility should, therefore, be directed toward the British.⁵²

The general mood was inclined toward favoring the use of violence. The Palestinians seemed to have gained greater strength by the support of both the Islamic and Arab Worlds. The Damascus demonstration in early November in support of the Palestinians and their struggle with the British and the Zionists was viewed in a favorable light.

On 9 November 1935, there was a call on all party leaders to join a general strike which would take place upon the arrival of the British High Commissioner at Jaffa, after he had ended a visit to Europe. On 10 No-

⁵¹ Darwazih, op. cit., p. 119.

⁵² Akram Zu'aitir, *Yawmiat Akram Z'aitir, Al-Harakah Al-Wataniyyah Filistiniyyah 1935-1939* (Diary of Akram Zu'aitir: Palestinian National Movement Documents 1935-1939). Beirut: Mua'ssat Ad-Dirasat Al-Filistiniyyah, 1980, p. 13.

member, the representatives of various political parties, with the exception of the Istiqlalists, met at the headquarters of Ad-Difa'. Their task was to discuss the national meeting in Nablus of 2 November. After a lengthy discussion, they decided on the issues concerning the High Commissioner's return to Palestine and the delivery of the memo containing all national demands by the Palestinian national parties. Any action to be taken before receiving a reply from the High Commissioner would not be in the interest of Palestine and the Palestinian people. The participants in the meeting, therefore, postponed all measures to be considered until they heard from the commissioner. This stand seemed typical of the traditional leadership, though it might have been contradictory to the general stand. Then a meeting was to be held in the headquarters of the Al-Arabi Party in Jerusalem. Among the signatures on the memo were Jamal Al-Husseini of the Palestinian Al-Arabi Party, Ragheb An-Nashashibi of the Ad-Difa' Party, Yaqoub Al-Qussain of the Youth Congress, Mohammed Ishaq of the Al-Islah Party and Shafiq Asal of the National Block Party.

In response to these decisions, some young leaders in Nablus met and decided to issue a leaflet including their assessment. In the pamphlet the committee, which had organized the general meeting in Nablus on 2 November 1935, harshly criticized the position taken by the traditional leadership with respect to the issue of the high commissioner's return to Palestine. They condemned the decision made by the convening political parties in Jerusalem. Those parties did not represent the view of the masses. Instead, they strongly criticized the British in their attempts to exterminate the nation. Furthermore, this decision mirrored the weakness of the leaders who adopted it. This defeated position of the parties, the pamphlet continued, constituted a new indication of the political bankruptcy of the traditional leadership and the genuine vision of the British occupation by the faithful and bold leaders in the national movement.⁵³

The majority of leaders meeting in Jerusalem were against the idea of launching a strike upon the arrival of the commissioner at Jaffa. The minority had then to obey the majority decision. On 13 November Nablus went on strike. On this occasion Akram Zu'aitir sent a telegraph to the High Commissioner. In it he stated that the strike in Nablus constituted an expression of the people's discontent. It was also intended to reflect on the masses' stand on his hostile statements made by the commissioner against the Arabs. Needless to point out, these elements came along with the British Government's established Zionist policy.⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 13-18.

⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 22-23.

The picture of the era in Palestine can be completed only by discussing the Al-Qussam movement and its stage in revolution. Ash-Sheikh ‘Izz Ad-Din Al-Qassam, a Syrian by birth, came to Palestine in 1921 right after the Syrian war with the French, in which he was a leading participant. That war had ended in favor of the French. He joined the Young Men’s Muslim Association, which he ultimately headed in 1929 during his work as an employee of the Shari’a Court. He toured different villages in Northern Palestine and succeeded in listing followers whom he organized into small groups, each with no more than five members. His goal was to raise their consciousness and revolutionary potential in preparation for launching a revolt against the occupation oppression and Zionist policy. In 1932 he joined the branch of the Istiqlalist Party in Haifa. After the events of 1933 had taken place, he began to collect donations to finance buying small quantities of arms. His movement was very secret, having its office in the old corner of Haifa where poor peasants and laborers were living.

The fast moving incidents of 1935 inspired Al-Qussam and his followers to stage a revolution by November of the same year. By the end of 1935 Wauchope wrote to his government that the rising number of displaced peasants and unemployed laborers, in addition to the savage treatment of the Palestinian people conducted by the British, were the facts of life in the country. The Zionist military trained its forces to cultivate a hostile and repulsive attitude towards the Arab, and their smuggling of arms was ignored by the British Government. In addition, the British did nothing to change the situation or to meet Arab demands of self-rule and a representative government. The Arabs were left with no option but to resort to revolution.

Al-Qussam and 25 followers left Haifa on 12 November. Their destination was Jenin. They intended to enlist new followers among the peasants. Those peasants were to be armed and directed toward the struggle with the British and Zionists. Before they had succeeded in gathering the support of the masses and surprising the British by declaring Haifa as liberated city, they found themselves in a fight with the British patrol. This incident forced the British to move forces of the British army and police in the Jenin area, which they placed under siege. Al-Qussam and two of his followers were killed, and five persons were taken prisoner.⁵⁵

The period under focus falls between two national uprisings. In fact, one may consider the later national uprising of 1936 to 1939 as a mere extension of the Wailing Wall incident of 1929.

⁵⁵ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-252.

The developments in the years 1930 to 1935 amounted to some quantitative changes. The British alliance with the Zionists was enhanced by the increasing British interests in Palestine, as of the discovery of oil in Iraq. This greatly aided the Zionists and their plans in Palestine. The Jewish immigration movement gained strength with the aid of the British in setting up the means and institutions to utilize natural resources. In addition, they strengthened their military organization.

THE PALESTINIAN NATIONAL UPRISING 1936 TO 1939

The Palestinian people in 1936 stunned friends and enemies alike in and outside of Palestine. They staged a three-year national uprising in two phases. Contrary to all calculations and expectations, this time the Palestinian national struggle was led by the masses.

This era in the history of the Palestinian national struggle was marked by new features. It seemed to have come as a breakup with the preceding politics of collaboration and negotiation with the British adopted by the traditional movement. But at the same time, it was the further development of the movements already in place. This methodologically requires a deep investigation of the existing relationship between the masses and the traditional leadership and how it progressed. The relationship of Palestine and its national movement with the neighboring Arab communities and the Arab liberation movement will be crucially important in relation to the theme of this work. It is useful to view the Palestinian national movement as an offshoot of the Arab nationalist movement in the development of the Palestinian dilemma.

The tension between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs had been escalating at an increased pace since the fall of 1935. This in part resulted from the Zionists' opposition to the installation of self-rule institutions for the Palestinians. This antagonized the Palestinians further in light of their already strained situation resulting from Jewish immigration. In February 1936, the government signed a contract with a Jewish subcontractor to build three schools in Jaffa. This subcontractor decided not to hire Arab workers. This angered the Palestinian workers who organized themselves in groups to blockade the arrival of Jewish workers at the work site. This planted the seeds for an eventually larger conflict.⁵⁶

The tension reached a dramatic point when the clashes started up again in mid-April. This time, the conflict was particularly bloody. On the night of 15 April, three Palestinians attacked a number of Jewish cars traveling on

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

the road nearby Anabta. As a result of this attack, two Jews were killed and a third was wounded. The Qassamis might have been behind this attack, due to the nature of its philosophies. They believed in armed struggle as the best means to cope with both the British and the Zionists.

On the following day, some Jews killed two Palestinian men on the road near Mlabbis out of revenge for the murder of the two Jews killed the day before. On 17 April, they also attacked Palestinian Arabs passing in the streets at the time of the funeral of the murdered Jew. On 19 April, when the other Jew was buried, the same thing occurred. When the people of Jaffa heard the news about the Jews attacking the Arabs there were violent reactions. The British High Commissioner had attempted to deter the news from reaching the ears of the people. The British also declared martial law and placed Jaffa and Tel Aviv under a curfew the night of 19 April.

On the morning of 20 April, the people of Jaffa awoke to find their city and its boats going on general strike. They also witnessed clashes that morning near Abu Kbear and Al-Manshiah. These clashes triggered the staging of demonstrations in various parts of the city. The government in turn quickly moved to use force and put an end to the disturbances. In response to the Jaffa incidents, the traditional leaders met with the British High Commissioner. In the meeting they expressed their sorrow for the disturbances, for which they blamed the government policy. They also informed the commissioner about their decision to delay a trip the delegation had planned to London.⁵⁷

In the midst of the incidents of mid-April, representatives of five political parties, namely, Al-Arabi, Al-Falatini, Ad-Difa', Al-Kutla and Al-Wataniyyah (the National Block), and the Youth Congress (but not the Istiqlalists) had met to discuss forming a delegation which would travel to London. They also discussed issues related to the representative body.

Meanwhile, on 19 April, Al-Lajnah Al-Qawmiyyah (the National Committee) held its first meeting, where it adopted the following decision:

First, they called upon each and every town and city to form its own Lajnah Qawmiyyah (National Committee).

Second, they decided to contact prominent national figures to make up the first National Committee to be formed in Nablus, and this committee was to be emulated in other towns.

⁵⁷ Al-Hut, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-333.

Third, they decided to contact all villages and call upon them to join the national endeavor.

Fourth, a call was supposed to be issued for the people of Nablus to insist upon the continuation of the strike.

Fifth, they decided to meet daily before and after noon.

Sixth, Akram Zu'aitir, the secretary of the committee, was in charge of executing these decisions.⁵⁸

Jaffa followed the footsteps of Nablus in forming its own National Committee responsible for organizing and directing the national action and activism. It was supposed to be an integral part of the wider national movement rather than being merely a local committee. As a result of the work in Jaffa, Nablus and Jerusalem, local leadership emerged, forming local committees. The formation of these committees came rapidly and without early preparations. Therefore, included in its ranks were nearly unknown leaders, in addition to the known traditional leaders, including figures representing both the Majlis and the Opposition.

During the first week of the general strike, the traditional leadership did nothing concerning the formation of a leading body for the strike. The first initiative in this regard came from Haifa. A delegation including Rashid Al-Haj Ibrahim, Mui'n Al-Madi, Mohammed Ali At-Tamimi, and Hanna Asfoul came to Jerusalem. They aimed at forming a leading body for the general strike. It was supposed to include representatives from the six political parties in Palestine. But there were a number of problems with this formation. The general strike was a national concern. The newly established leadership for the strike was composed of an incohesive interests and political colors. Moreover, the traditional leadership this time faced new challenges. They were put under the stress of how to reconcile their interests with the government with their commitment to being anti-British. These facts suggest that the Arab Higher Committee would either be paralyzed or have a negative impact on the national endeavor by crippling the national movement and the people's struggle.

The traditional leadership believed that it should either take the initiative and lead the movement at the time of the general strike, or it would lose its leading position for good. During the discussions, Ragheb An-Nashashibi insisted upon the participation of the Mufti as the chairman of the committee. The Mufti meanwhile expressed a great deal of reluctance in accepting this position. His rationale behind this was based on the idea that

⁵⁸ Zu'aitir, *Watha'iq Al-Harakah*. p. 410.

the presence of the opposition in the committee would leave him with no room to execute his role properly. His reluctance seemed to have stemmed from his desire to avoid being forced to adopt an anti-British attitude.

The formation of the Arab Higher Committee seemed to have taken into account the representation of various political parties in addition to the denominational aspect. Despite this impression, the three major parties were given two representatives each. Jamal Al-Husseini and Alfred Rock were the Catholic representatives of the Al-Arabi Party. Ragheb An-Nashashibi and Yaqoub Farraj represented the Orthodox denomination and the Ad-Difa' Party. The Istiqlal Party was represented by Awni Abdul Hadi and Ahmad Hilmi Abdul Al-Baqi, an independent member. It is worth noting that this committee did not dominate the whole scene. It was a representative body and an official speaker for the Palestinian people. It had little or no control over the National Committees.

On 25 April, the Arab Higher Committee issued its first manifesto. In it, the committee announced its formation. It further highlighted the main components of its political program. It called for the general strike to be in effect until the government changed its policy and put an end to Jewish immigration. In addition, the manifesto reasserted the three main national demands, which included bringing the Jewish immigration to a halt, putting an end to the sale of Arab land and its transfer to Jewish hands, and the creation of a national parliamentary government.⁵⁹

The representation of different political parties in the Arab Higher Committee was intended to accomplish the concentrated effort of these parties as a united force and as an organizing body for the uprising activities. Rivalry within the committee between the Majlisis and the opposition along family, party and personal lines affected the role and the conduct of the committee. The rivalry, which existed on different levels during the formation of the committee, might have translated into the adoption of certain measures of civil disobedience in the early stages of the general strike.⁶⁰

At the end of April or early May of 1936, Arab women held a meeting in Jerusalem. They issued a call on both the Arab Higher Committee and the national committees to boycott government meetings and not to negotiate with the government or decide on major concerns without obtaining the approval of the masses in a general national congress.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Al-Hut, op. cit. pp. 335-337.

⁶⁰ Darwazih, p. 123.

⁶¹ Kayyali, op. cit., p. 265-266.

On 8 May, the National Committee held its conference in Jerusalem. The rivalry among various political groups dominated the discussion. But other topics did come to the table. The participants not only decided on the continuation of a general strike, but they also adopted the slogan “no taxation without representation.” In addition, it was declared that the main objective of the Palestinian struggle was the accomplishment of the country’s independence within an Arab commonwealth. It also called upon certain Arab officials to resign their posts.

Along with staging a general strike, the Palestinians utilized some aspects of civil disobedience. In addition, young men in both rural and urban settings used guerilla warfare against British and Zionist personnel and installations. This put great pressure on the British. They used all oppressive means against the Palestinians in their attempt to put an end to the strike. The arrest of the young men and the mass collective punishment and demolition of Old Jaffa did not bring about an end to the uprising.⁶² It rather raised the revolutionary potential of the Palestinian people.

Since the early days of the general strike, the British had unsuccessfully attempted to use political channels in order to end the strike. High Commissioner Wauchope held a meeting with the representatives of various political parties on 21 April. He asked them to use their influence to put an end to the disturbances. He also called upon them to name their representatives in a delegation to travel to London, where it would hold its meeting in the British Foreign Office on 4 May. They repeated their concern to the High Commissioner that an end be put to Jewish immigration to the country. This would constitute a national step for further negotiation. Jamal Al-Husseini, chairman of the Al-Arabi Party expressed concern over the police acts which gave the impression that the British were the actual enemy of the Palestinians. Al-Husseini also asserted that the delegation would not leave to London until peace and stability again prevailed in the country.⁶³

The traditional leaders, though they did not control the national uprising in its early days, tried to utilize it as a means to accomplish political ends. They were obviously greatly interested in using this leverage to hold back Jewish immigration, and in so doing, rescue their challenged leadership. This would have also kept them from being forced to stand openly against the British.

The failure of the British in exploiting their friendship with the Palestinian traditional leadership switched their attention toward their Arab allies outside Palestine. Their interest lay in the prospects of the Arab leader-

⁶² Ibid., pp. 208-272.

⁶³ Khillih, op. cit. p. 610.

ship's use of influence in ending the uprising. Prince Abdullah of Transjordan was a reliable ally. He tended to weaken the revolutionary activities in Palestine through halting the aid from neighboring Arab countries to Palestine. He deterred Syrian and Iraqi fighters from crossing Jordanian soil on their way to join their Palestinian brothers in the struggle with the Zionists and British. The British in this respect acknowledged the Prince's role. They also thanked him personally through their commissioner in Amman, as indicated in a report sent to the Mandate International Commissioner. He ordered the British troops stationed in the emirate, the Jordanian army, and the Bedouin troops to act in accordance with this policy. They all cooperated to close down the borders with Palestine before the Arab volunteers traveling to Palestine could get there.

In order to wholly achieve this task, they shot and wounded tens of those volunteers, especially in Ajlun in March of 1936 and in Al-Yarmouk in March of 1939. Prince Abdullah also prevented those volunteers in Palestine from re-crossing Jordanian land on their way back to Syria and Iraq during the imposed cease-fire. In his endeavor to accomplish this goal, he established several police camps in Ajlun, Irbid, Khirbe, Al-Fahil and Al-Mafraq. At the same time, the British troops, the Jordanian army and the Bedouins all together did their best to safeguard the Jews who very often stayed in Jordan for either political or economic purposes. These troops also aided in transporting arms from military camps in Jordan to Jewish persons residing in the frontier zone via British officers and private vehicles.⁶⁴

In May 1936, Prince Abdullah received the delegation sent by the Arab Higher Committee to Amman. He discussed the prospects of putting an end to violence. In a letter he sent to the British High Commissioner, he wrote:

“It became sure, Your Excellency, that the delegation was owned rather being owner, controlled rather than being free in leading the country to what it was known as before. Some of them received letters of threats on their lives, in case they showed weakness or did not well serve their people... When I advised them not to use violence, they rejected it saying it was proper to conduct these acts. They know the British power. Their movement is peaceful and comprehensive through which they have intended to express their oppressed feelings for the last eighteen years.”⁶⁵

The British became increasingly interested in terminating the general strike. In consultation with the Arab Higher Committee they tried seri-

⁶⁴ Sayigh, *op. cit.*, p. 103.

⁶⁵ Al-Hut, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-347.

ously to control the uprising and end it by depending on the influence of the British Arab allies in various Arab countries. The British therefore called upon Prince Abdullah to act as a mediator. The Prince in response invited the Arab Higher Committee in June 1936. In response to his inquiry concerning the situation in Palestine the Arab Higher Committee said “we cannot stop the strike unless the Jewish immigration is to be stopped.”⁶⁶

On 7 August 1936, Prince Abdullah met again with the Higher Committee in Amman. This time the Prince claimed that he had succeeded in creating moderation. He received support from Ad-Difa’ and *Al-Jam’iyyah Al-Islamiyyah* newspaper. The moderates among the Palestinians would not, he added, contribute substantively unless they received promises concerning the following:

First, the detainees in Sarafand Prison would be gradually released.

Second, the government should remove all aspects of collective punishment imposed on the villages.

Third, a general pardon for all armed Palestinians should be declared. The men who were arrested carrying arms should not be charged. Furthermore, the people who were sentenced should be given hope for mercy and possible forgiveness.

Fourth, the people who were charged and sentenced for murder had to be treated mercifully.

Fifth, the government had to issue a pamphlet in which it would make sure that the Jewish immigration to Palestine would be stopped during the visit of a Royal Commission.⁶⁷

Nuri As-Said, the Iraqi foreign minister, held views similar to that of Prince Abdullah at the time of the mediation role. He stated,

“The Arab leaders with no doubt had covered themselves with foolishness by the continuation of the strike and troubled themselves by being involved in the disturbances until the Jewish immigration was stopped. Each and every Arab knows this fact. If the leaders called for ending the strike without achieving first and foremost a full stop to Jewish immigration, not just their life but the lives of their subordinates would be in danger by fanatics.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Khillih, op. cit., p. 637.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 637.

⁶⁸ Al-Hut, op. cit., p. 346-347.

On 12 August 1936, Nuri As-Said had his lunch with the British High Commissioner at the palace. In that meeting he pointed out that the Palestinian leaders could not end the general strike unless they received assurances in advance. The muft and Ragheb An-Nashashibi also had fears concerning their lives. Nuri As-Said indicated before the High Commissioner that he informed the Palestinian leaders that they should take steps in the direction of stopping the general strike. Governments, he added, never negotiated with mutineers.

On 20 August, Nuri As-Said arrived in Jerusalem. He seemed to have been in charge of making the Arab Higher Committee unconditionally end the strike. The only reason for the committee to do so were on condition of receiving verbal promises from the government.

On 22 August, Nuri As-Said hoped that he could convince the Arab Higher Committee of his motion. The committee then would call for ending the strike on the basis of his memorandum. He also indicated that the Iraqi Government would not make contact with His Majesty's Government until the position of the Arab Higher Committee became clear.

On the same day, Wauchope asked his subordinate to inform As-Said that His Majesty's Government views with satisfaction his mediation effort. Since As-Said could only stay for a very short period in Palestine, due to the very dangerous situation, he asked As-Said to immediately send a telegraph concerning the mediation. A delay in the mediation, he added, would strengthen the position of the fanatics. Nuri As-Said considered at that time the prospects for having Prince Abdullah and Ibn Saud join the effort later on.

On 22 August, Nuri As-Said also sent his memorandum to the Higher Committee. In it he stated that the Iraqi Government, based on the nationalist feeling which linked the Iraqi people and the Palestinians, found itself obliged to offer its mediation gesture between the Palestinians and the British. This also took into account the fact that the Iraqi and the British Governments were tied though friendship and strong alliance.

In this memorandum he included the proposal, first, that the Arab Higher Committee would take all necessary steps to put an end to the general strike and violence, and second, that the Iraqi Government would take the responsibility of working with the British Government to settle all legitimate Palestinian demands.

On 23 August, As-Said informed the secretary of the government of Palestine that Awni Abdul Hadi and Izzat Darwazih accepted his plan. The Arab Higher Committee held a meeting where Nuri As-Said explained in detail his proposals, which the committee accepted.

On 24 August, Nuri As-Said informed Wauchope of the Arab Higher Committee's acceptance of his plan, and within two or three days it would act diligently to make the National Committees accept the plan as well.

On 13 August, the Arab Higher Committee issued the pamphlet. It announced the committee's acceptance of the Iraqi mediation role along with the Arab kings, princes and leaders. It viewed this mediation with satisfaction and trust. It declared his intention to put the entire matter before the Palestinian people through the active National Committees. This would be carried out in a general congress where the people would give their views on the issue. The people at the same time would continue their general strike steadily and with great confidence.⁶⁹

The British showed great interest in having Ibn Saud contribute to the mediation effort aimed at ending the general strike. The British were well aware of Ibn Saud's ties with the Mufti of Palestine. On 1 July 1936, the British tried to examine the prospects of Ibn Saud's role in the mediation work. They informed him that he did not only serve His Majesty's Government, but rather, he would render a great service to the Palestinian Arabs. He did not show any reluctance to accept this assignment, however, he conditioned his role by coordinating with other Arab leaders like Prince Abdullah, King Ghazi and Iman Yahia.

On 15 July, Ibn Saud sent a letter to Prince Abdullah of Transjordan. In this letter he stated that in case the situation in Palestine continued as it was, he suggested that the Arab leaders, kings and emirs issue a collective call asking the Palestinian Arabs to put an end to the strike and violence. By doing so they would offer the British an opportunity to treat their demand justly. The Arab kings and emirs would also be given the chance to beg the British to deal with the Palestinian demands and aspirations.

On 12 August, King Ibn Saud sent a letter to the Arab Higher Committee in which he stated that the situation in Palestine hurt him as much as it brought pain to each and every Arab and Muslim. Therefore, he had extensive contact and discussion with King Ghazi and Iman Yahia. He further indicated that he contacted the British Government. He viewed with

⁶⁹ Khillih, op. cit., p. 642-645.

sympathy the Palestinian just demands and rights, which the British would consider just after peace and calmness would prevail in the country.⁷⁰

The Arab leaders' effort at ending the general strike through political plans and their alliance with the traditional leadership in Palestine came along with the concern of having prisons in the battlefield. There they could increase their control over the situation in Palestine. On 28 September 1936, Fawzi Al-Qawuqji and his volunteer followers arrived in Palestine. His followers were composed of a military expedition of 80 volunteers from Iraq. Al-Qawuqji, who assumed the title of general command of the revolution, was in his forties and was of Lebanese origin from Tripoli. He graduated from Constantinople Military School. He participated in the Arab Revolt.

Al-Qawuqji's expedition stayed almost two months. Its withdrawal from Palestine came upon a call by military commands, especially after the Arab Higher Committee had accepted the call by the Arab kings and emirs to end the strike.⁷¹

By September, the British had become highly concerned about bringing the general strike to a hold. On 12 September, Wauchope warned the Arab Higher Committee of the possibility that the British would launch a devastating military action against the Palestinian Arabs in the event that the strike and violence continued. In the commissioner's view, they obviously "could not encounter such action." Wauchope also sent a telegraph to the Colonial Office in London. In this telegraph he pointed out that he had come out of his meeting with the members of the Arab Higher Committee with the belief that the committee was interested in ending the strike. The committee was ready to call for stopping the general strike in case it were to receive a call from the Arab kings and emirs to do so.

Mufti Amin Al-Husseini began his serious contacts with King Ibn Saud and King Ghazi to issue their needed collective call. At that time the British sent additional troops to Palestine on 22 September. Their main task was primarily to bring the Arab uprising to surrender.⁷²

On 8 October 1936 the Arab kings and emirs issued their call upon the Palestinian Arabs to halt their strike. In King Ibn Saud's call, which was similar to those of both Prince Abdullah and King Ghazi, he stated:

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 638-641.

⁷¹ Khillih, op. cit., p. 350-351.

⁷² Ibid., p. 648.

“Dear Chairman of the Arab Higher Committee to all Palestinian Arabs, The situation in Palestine caused us pain. We are in agreement with our brothers, the Arab kings, and Prince Abdullah who call upon you to return to calmness and to stop bloodshed. We rely on the goodwill of our friends in the British Government and their declared intention to achieve justice. You should be confident that we will continue our effort to aid you.”⁷³

On 11 October, the Arab Higher Committee issued its call in response to the collective one by the Arab leaders. This call pointed out,

“Since Your Majesties the Arab kings and Your Highnesses the Arab emirs are part of our Arab heritage and tradition, the Arab Higher Committee believes beyond any doubt that Your Majesties and Highnesses would never command our sons to do something unless it had been within their interests and held the preservation of their lives in mind. The Arab Higher Committee, therefore, in compliance with the wishes of Your Majesties the kings and Your Highnesses the Arab emirs in the belief that their mediation and aid will result in great benefit, calls upon the Arab people to put an end to the general strike and disturbances in execution of those royal orders which we know have no intent but the Arab general interest.”⁷⁴

The Arab Higher Committee, in consultation with the National Committees and in compliance with the Arab call, asked the Palestinian people to end the general strike starting Monday, 12 October. They were advised to go back to live their normal lives; to work, shop, pray in their mosques and churches and to open their stores and supermarkets.

The British, in coordination with the traditional leadership in Palestine and the allies in the Arab regimes, finally succeeded in bringing the general strike to a halt. The traditional leadership justified its decision to put an end to the strike by its concerns over the well being of the Palestinian masses. They considered the masses as being incapable of facing up to the British war machine which was forced and prepared to curb the rising masses in Palestine. They also expressed worry over the suffering of the people due to the long period of the strike. This justification could be seen as a cover up for the actual reasons behind the traditional leadership’s act in October 1936. The class and family interests of this leadership must have been the impetus behind their ending of the strike. The time for col-

⁷³ Zu’aitir, *op. cit.*, p. 648.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 458.

lecting and marketing the olives and citrus products was at hand, and the continuation of the general strike might have ruined this economic season.⁷⁵

Between the justification and the actual reasons behind ending the general strike lay the weakness and impotence of the traditional leadership. These characteristics of the leadership could be also seen in its acceptance of ending the strike without receiving assurances and commitments from the British to resolve the Palestinian cause through granting the Palestinians independence. They had also failed to obtain a British commitment to send a Royal Commission to investigate the situation in Palestine and subsequently recommend the proper means to justly resolve the Palestinian dilemma.

The traditional leadership accepted Nuri As-Said's advice not to condition the ending of general strike with the British willingness to send an inquiry commission. Nuri As-Said phoned Awni Abdul Hadi twice. In these phone calls As-Said asserted that the Palestinians could in no way court the British Government and obtain its commitment to resolve the Palestinian cause in exchange for ending the general strike and the disturbances.⁷⁶

The head of the Colonial Office Ormsby-Gore stated before the House of Commons that halting Jewish immigration to Palestine during the work of the Royal Commission was economically unjustifiable. In accordance with this stand, Ormsby-Gore decided to keep the door open for Jewish immigration. He also issued permission for the immigration of 1,800 Jewish workers. His statement caused Arabs despair. The Higher Committee decided to boycott all meetings and work of the Royal Commission.⁷⁷

The decision made by the Higher Committee to boycott the work of the Royal Commission on 5 November was put before the Arab kings and Emirs. The British again turned back to the Arab leaders to ease the tension of the situation in Palestine and to make the Higher Committee change its stand with respect to the Royal Commission. In this regard it is worth noting that the head of the Colonial Office the following day, in his announcement before the House of Commons concerning Jewish immigration, indicated that the British did not assign to the Arab leaders or anyone else the role of bringing the general strike to an end. He said that earlier some of them had advised their fellow Arabs in Palestine to end the violence and the strike, and that this role played by those leaders was not rejected by the British.

⁷⁵ Khillih, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 651.

⁷⁷ Al-Hut, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

The Arab Higher Committee carried out its earlier decision to boycott the Royal Commission. It received support from various classes and segments in the society.

The reception made for the commission was marked by the absence of the Palestinian leadership, with the exception of one member and two government employees. Since the commission had arrived in Palestine, the Palestinian leadership came under an increasing pressure to change its position. This pressure came mainly from Amman, Riyadh and Baghdad. Emir Abdullah started his work of pressuring the Palestinian leadership. He sent a memo to the committee in which he considered their decision to be erroneous. He telegraphed both Riyadh and Baghdad informing them of his views. The Emir continued this process of sending messages and messengers everywhere. His main concern was to point out the necessity of the Higher Committee to end the boycott and to receiving a gathering of the Royal Commission. After the commission had arrived in Palestine, the Emir visited Jerusalem. He stayed at the King David Hotel in which the commission resided. This stay gave him the opportunity to meet with the commission and to invite its members to visit Amman. More importantly, he contacted the Higher Committee during his stay in Jerusalem. He attempted to convince its members of the importance of meeting with the Royal Commission or to authorize him officially to speak with the commission on behalf of the Palestinian people. He seemed interested in replacing the Palestinian representatives. In other words, he seemed to be greatly concerned with possessing control over the fate and the future of Palestine.

Several messages from Riyadh came to Palestine they included the insistence of the Saudi leadership on the need for the Palestinians to meet with the commission and the ramifications involved if they did not comply. This Saudi leadership also threatened to break their ties with the Palestinians if the boycott remained in effect. In return, the Higher Committee wrote to both Amman and Riyadh. It called upon the leadership in the two countries to exert pressure on the British Government in London rather than pressuring the Palestinians. The Saudi and the Jordanian regimes informed the committee that their attempt to place pressure on the British was not fruitful.

The Higher Committee sent delegations to both Baghdad and Riyadh. This delegation included Kamil Al-Qassab, Awni Abdul Hadi, Izzat Darwazih and Mu'in Al-Madi. Sending the delegations was intended to explain the Palestinian position before the Arab leaders and to clear up the atmosphere of misunderstanding. The delegations received from the Iraqi officials no British commitments or promises, with the exception of the

British Government's readiness to implement the recommendations made by the Royal Commission. The Iraqi Government could only advise the Higher Committee to keep up with its work and the endeavor to achieve Palestinian aspirations.

In their visit to Riyadh, the members of the delegation stated the Palestinian position. The reply from the Saudi regime was similar to that of the Iraqis, however the delegation noticed the Saudis' heavy reliance on the British. This point was crucial in directing the Saudi foreign policy. The position and reservations presented by the delegation received little or no attention from the Saudis. Instead, the Saudi leaders insisted upon the Higher Committee receiving and meeting with the Royal Commission and the Saudis would follow up with the British concerning the Palestinian cause. This initiation of this promise was followed with a similar one from the Iraqi Government in a hand-written form. On the delegation's way back to Palestine, it passed through Damascus. There the delegation received advice from the newly elected government in Syria to keep up contact with the commission until achieving independence.

The delegation held a meeting with the Higher Committee in which it presented the committee with the results of their visits to Baghdad and Riyadh. After this meeting the committee decided to adopt a position complying with the views of both the Saudi and the Iraqi kings in a call issued by the Higher Committee dated January 1937. The committee stated that they had listened to reports made by the delegation. It read the two letters by their Majesties the Iraqi and the Saudi kings. It could not but comply with their command. It decided to contact the Royal Commission and present the Arab question before it.⁷⁸

During the third week of January 1937, Mufti Amin Al-Husseini visited Saudi Arabia. His declared intention was to execute the pilgrimage duty. In fact he intended to consult with the Saudi king with respect to issues relating to Palestinian cause. After he had returned to Palestine, he issued a bulletin on 19 March 1937. In it he condemned all forms of violence and political assassinations which had taken place in the country in the previous year. The Higher Committee, he added, founded the *ummah* interest to be working in accordance with the advice of Arab Emirs and Kings. It advised the *ummah* to keep itself away from resorting to violence and acts of disturbance. The people, he continued, should await with great confidence what they had been promised to receive. On 24 March, Ormsby-Gore pointed out that the Arab Higher Committee issued

⁷⁸ Darwazih, op. cit., pp. 148-153.

a bulletin in which it advised the masses to keep calm. The Jewish agency had also issued a similar leaflet for the Jews.⁷⁹

The Royal Commission finalized its work, proposing a partition plan for Palestine. This plan was intended to accomplish the Zionist idea through political means. On 1 June 1937, the Higher Committee issued a memorandum. It pointed out that Palestine was part and parcel of the whole Arab World, and the Arabs would never give away an inch of their land to be turned into non-Arab land or to become subject to Jewish control.⁸⁰

At the time the partition plan was issued, Palestine witnessed a state of mass anger and discontent, especially in the northern parts. As Ahmad Ash-Shuqeiri in Akka and Issa Al-Bitar in Jaffa, two prominent figures in the opposition, were first to condemn the partition plan. The two figures encouraged the Higher Committee to contact Ragheb An-Nashashibi.

The committee suggested that An-Nashashibi should return to the committee membership. This would portray the Palestinian people as a united *ummah* since the opposition shared with the other leaders their position on the partition plan. An-Nashashibi stated the position of the Ad-Difa' Party of non-participation in the Higher Committee, however, the leaders of the party would adopt a similar stand to those in the committee, especially when it came to vital matters.

The Hashemite leadership in Amman tried to contact the opposition in Palestine. It aimed at creating a block, which would accept and support the British Plan. More importantly such a rift by the opposition would deepen the gap within the Palestinian national movement. The opposition could not accept such a request by Amman, because the state of discontent with respect to the plan was on the horizon.⁸¹

Al-Mufti, in late June 1937, tried to deal in a friendly manner with the British, though he himself was subject to assassination. He was pressured by internal conditions, and given the state of mass anger and discontent, he was forced to change his positions a little bit. On 22 June, he visited Damascus with his close aids. He met all the prominent leaders in the national movement there. In addition to Lebanese and Syrians, some journalists, politicians, and even some Iraqis were included. He also met with the Saudi consul in Syria.

⁷⁹ Khillih, op. cit., p. 669.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 671.

⁸¹ Darwazih, op. cit., p. 161.

According to a British report sent to the government in London, dated 5 July, the Mufti's discussions in Syria centered on two major issues. First, the political situation in the Arab World on the whole was generally presented and discussed. In addition, the issue of a merger of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine with the Syrian National Block was considered. Secondly, the partition plan for Palestine presented by the Royal Commission was seriously taken into account. The inauguration of Emir Abdullah as king in the proposed Arab state was totally opposed by all positions there.

The issue of the partition plan at that time was still burning. The Arab Higher Committee issued a leaflet on 8 July. It did not declare a clear stand on the partition plan, but rather it stated that Palestine did not belong just to the Palestinians but to the Arab and Muslim people as a whole.

The committee, therefore, was in need of the advice of the Arab kings since it always referred to the Arab and Muslim leaders during crises. Needless to point out that the Palestinian leadership viewed itself and the Palestinian struggle as part of a wider movement in the Arab and Muslim Worlds. Since the British policy contradicted the Palestinian interests and aspirations, the Palestinian leadership found itself obliged to contact and consult with Arab and Muslim leaders. Therefore it sent a memorandum to all Arab and Muslim emirs and kings. In this memo it was stated,

“The Palestinian Arabs ask for your guidance in this difficult historical situation. They also call upon you, based on the secrets of this land, Arab goodwill and religious duties, to rescue the country from the ills of colonization, the threats and fragmentation.”⁸²

In accordance with this request by the Palestinian leadership, the Arab rulers included their stands on the partition plan in their replies sent to the Higher Committee. In his telegraph Hikmat Suleiman, the Iraqi prime minister, condemned the British plan. They also received letters of support from Al-Azhar and Mohammed Al-Basyuni, a prominent member of the Wafd Party and head of the Arab Union. Moreover, the youth in the Al-Watani (National) Party held a gathering in which they expressed their condemnation and the denouncement of the British policy in Palestine. They also urged the Egyptian Government and masses to hold a similar stand to that of the Iraqi Government and its people.

Before a press conference, An-Nahhas Pasha presented a position in which he tried to project the interest and concern of the Egyptians in the Pales-

⁸² Khillih, *op. cit.*, pp. 672-675.

tinian cause. In his talk with the British ambassador, he expressed his condemnation of their policy. Al-Imam Yahyia, the Yemeni ruler, also expressed his opposition to the partition plan. Ibn Saud, at the same time, asserted that he would never fall short in his support of the Palestinians and would aid in preserving their rights. It is worth noting that Darwazih stated that the Palestinians received Ibn Saud's reply with little enthusiasm. It came unexpectedly and with little vitality and momentum. The people expected more from Ibn Saud's reply because he was known for his insistence on more alliance with and dependence upon the British.

Jamil Mardam, the Syrian prime minister, presented similar views to those of the Arab leaders. He strongly rejected the partition plan and the possibility of taking away a part of Palestine and transferring it to non-Arab hands.⁸³

Despite the Arab collective opposition to the partition plan, Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, along with the Zionists, accepted the plan, though the Jews considered it unsatisfactory according to their ambitions and plans.⁸⁴ The Hashemite Emir's acceptance of the plan might reveal his interest in having the Palestinian section in the plan be added to his emirate. This scheme would give his emirate in Transjordan more demographic and economic vitality. In response to the Hashemite Emir's position, Assad Ash-Shuqeiri sent a letter to Amman. In this letter he stated that God, his messenger, and the believers reject the partition and the establishment of the Jewish commonwealth.⁸⁵

In the summer of 1937, the situation became very critical, especially after the British had issued the partition plan. In the middle of these developments the Palestinians were in a greater need for a united Arab position. The Arab Higher Committee, therefore, asked for the British permission to hold a General Arab Congress. The conferees were to state the Arab stand clearly, similar to what the Zionists had done before. The British opposition to the convening of such a congress forced the Higher Committee to coordinate its work with the Committee for the Defense of Palestine stationed in Syria. They consequently agreed to hold the Arab Congress in Bludan. Nabih Al-Azmah, head of the Committee for the Defense of Palestine, took charge of sending invitations to the potential participants. Ten days later, the Congress was convened from 8 to 10 September 1937. There were as many as 327 participants from Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. The participants elected Naji As-Swidi

⁸³ Darwazih, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁸⁴ Sayigh, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁸⁵ Darwazih, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

from Iraq as a chairman. Mohammed Ali Allubah, Shakib Arsalan and Minster Hariq were chosen for the chairmanship. Izzat Darwazih, the representative of the Higher Committee, became secretary general, and Fu'ad Khalil Mufrih was selected as an associate secretary general. The decisions made by the conferees included an opposition to the partition plan.⁸⁶

The inaugural statements outlined the major themes to be considered in the meeting. They also included the general sentiment existing in the region at that time. In his statement, Nabih Al-Azmah pointed out that Palestine, for all Arabs, not just for its people, was the linking point between the Arabs in Asia and Africa. He said that the Palestinians should not be left alone in defending it or determining its fate. The Arabs should not accept any nation's conquest of it, wholly or partially. They all should be united in the face of the establishment of the Jewish commonwealth and the execution of the partition.⁸⁷

Mohammed Al-Allubah in his speech stressed that the Arab nations were supposed to defend Palestine. The presence of foreign people in this region constituted severe illness in the national body. Therefore this illness must be quickly removed, and Palestine should remain an Arab country. The Arab Higher Committee position, as presented by its representative, Izzat Darwazih, stated that the Palestinian cause was an Arab and Muslim concern, and that each and every Arab and Muslim should carry out his responsibility in the struggle with the Zionists toward the preservation of Palestine as an Arab and Muslim country. Abdul Hamid Said at the same time reminded them that the British aimed at creating a Jewish homeland in Palestine as a colonial military complex. It was supposed to subject the whole region, whereby the British could always protect and enforce their colonial interests in the Middle East. The participants in the meeting asserted that Palestine should be looked upon as part of the Arab World and restated the concerns and demands relating to Zionism. The existence of the British friendship with the Arabs lay on the British compliance with these demands and the insistence on keeping up with its position. The Zionist policy would force the Arabs to take new attitudes towards them. The Jewish coexistence along with the Arabs in Palestine could be only on the above-mentioned basis. The Jewish rights could also be maintained in accordance with a constitutional regulations.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Khillih, op. cit., p. 680.

⁸⁷ Darwazih, op. cit., p. 183.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 183-185.

The Palestinian Arab leadership was apparently concerned about keeping the Palestinian cause and the struggle with the Zionism in an Arab context. The traditional leadership in Palestine would consequently receive the support and the guidance of the Arab leadership. The Arab leaders at the same time would preserve to themselves the role of making events in Palestine. More importantly, the leadership in and outside Palestine seemed to have sensed an outbreak of violence, so they, might have decided to keep ahead of these eventualities.

Despite all measures taken by the British against the National Committees and the Palestinian leaders in the Higher Committee, as well as the work done by the British to silence all Palestinian media with respect to the events of 1 October 1937, on 2 October, Jerusalem went on strike in protest of the arrest of its national leaders. In the following two days the strike spread to other parts of the country. Two days later, the Mufti issued a call for the Palestinian masses in which he asked them to end the strike and go back to their normal daily work and living. Al-Mufti's call seemed to have been part of a deal with the British. This call, along with the Mufti's willingness for voluntary expulsion would allow for the British abandonment of his arrest warrant and his departure from Al-Aqsa Mosque to Beirut on 14 October.

The night of 14 October, the state of calmness was over, and violence broke out. Two attacks on vehicles transporting Jewish passengers in different parts of Jerusalem took place. The Jewish colonial settlements came under sporadic gunfire. The Iraqi pipeline passing through Palestine sustained partial damages close to the western bank of the Jordan River. Spilled oil caught fire, the phone lines were cut, and the railways sustained damage. Trains transporting British troops also came under heavy gunfire in the western zone of Jerusalem. The police patrols in Hebron also came under gunfire. Jerusalem consequently was under curfew. On the following day, some Palestinian rebellions infiltrated Tel-Aviv Airport. They set all the wooden offices on fire including the duty offices, passport offices and wireless installations. They also demolished two houses and imposed a collective penalty of 5,000 Palestinian pounds.⁸⁹

The lack of organization in the Palestinian effort led the Palestinian leadership to form Al-Markaziyyah Lil-Jihad (the Central Committee for Holy War). More importantly they aimed through this formation at controlling all actions in Palestine. This committee included Amin Al-Husseini, Hasan Abu As-Saud, Munif Al-Husseini and Ishaq Darwish. In

⁸⁹ Kayyali, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288.

Beirut, Izzat Darwazih was in charge of its actual politics and Mui'n Al-Madi was in charge in Damascus. Darwazih pointed out that the formation of this committee came for organizing, directing and supplying the uprising and providing medical care for the injured participants. He added that the committee drafted Abdul Rahim Al-Haj Mohammed, Abu Ibrahim Al-Kabir and Ash-Sheikh 'Ata for the purpose of leading the uprising in the second phase.⁹⁰

Some Transjordanians, Syrians and Lebanese came to Palestine to participate along with the Palestinians in the uprising activities. The leaders of the uprising were the peasants, whom the Central Committee for Holy War trained and directed for the purpose of carrying out certain duties.

The Palestinian uprising had a great impact on both the Arab and Islamic worlds. In Egypt, Allubah worked diligently to form a parliamentary committee in which prominent figures in various political parties participated. It wrote a memorandum including a protest of all injustice inflicted on Palestinian people. It also emphasized Palestinian Arab troops and tribes. Over 170 persons signed this memorandum.

The committee also decided to hold a Parliamentary Congress in Cairo in support of the Palestinian Arabs. It was held in the summer of 1938, and several parliamentarians representing Egypt, Iraq, Syria and Lebanon participated. Delegations from Palestine, Morocco, Indian Muslims and Bosnia's joined the work of the Congress. The participants in this Congress decided to support the Palestinian National Charter and to condemn the British insistence on a partition plan for Palestine. The Congress also considered sending a delegation to London. This delegation was supposed to put these stands adopted by the Congress before the British Government. Allubah headed this delegation in its trip to the British capital. Its task and endeavor was supported by King Faruq.

Soon after holding the Arab Parliamentary Conference, the Arab Women's Congress convened in Cairo. Huda Ash-Sharawi played an instrumental role in bringing this conference to light, not to neglect Akram Zu'aiter's role in putting the women's conference into action. Arab women from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq participated. They represented women's associations and unions in their home countries. In their conference they echoed the Arab Parliamentary Congress in supporting the Palestinian National Charter and denouncing the British injustices targeted at Palestinian people.

⁹⁰ Khillih, op. cit., p. 701.

The Transjordanians were moved by the Palestinian uprising. Violence and rioting were in each and every city, especially in Amman. The people launched several actions. They targeted the oil pipelines passing through the emirate. They also attacked several police departments and government offices, especially in Ajlun District. Moreover, some nationalist groups contacted the Central Committee for Holy, War in Palestine. They tried to coordinate their effort with the committee and to channel their share in the uprising. They were also prepared for staging revolutionary actions against the British presence.

Syria and Lebanon played an important role since they provided Palestine with its needed supplies. In addition, they fueled the Palestinian uprising. The Syrians and Lebanese were instrumental in collecting donations for the aid of the Palestinians, an endeavor in which Nabih Al-Azmah played a crucial role. At the end, they issued a manifesto in which they declared their open support to the Palestinians and their condemnations of the British conduct.

The media at that time pointed to Ibn Saud's concern about the Palestinian cause. He opposed the partition plan, and his contacts with the British Government and his memos sent to the British expressed his stand on the issue of Palestine. The Crown Prince Saud was always concerned during his visits about the Palestinians' rights. He expressed his strong opposition to the partition scheme and any consideration to 'Judify' any part of Palestine.⁹¹

By the end of August 1938, the British civil administration in various cities suffered almost a total collapse, despite all British measures of crushing the uprising. This resulted from the Palestinians' systematic attacks of British administrative offices. The uprising also widely spread to the extent that each and every Palestinian held a hostile attitude against British and Zionists. In response to this situation, MacDonald commanded sending additional troops in October. Before the arrival of those troops all the administration establishments ceased to exist. The Palestinian revolutionaries liberated several cities, and they were very often able to sneak into other cities and exert authority there. It is important to note that when the citrus cultivation season came, the uprising did not suffer as it had in the previous uprising in 1936, because the leadership of the uprising in the new phase of nothing to do with the cultivation and trade in citrus.

⁹¹ Darwazih, op. cit., p. 221-225.

At this stage MacDonald and the British Government, moved by the situation in Europe and the expansionist policy of the Nazis in Germany, decided to contain the Palestinian uprising through a political scheme. MacDonald proposed sending additional troops and a police force to Palestine. He also announced his intention to call upon delegations representing the Palestinian Arabs and the Jewish Agency to discuss the partition plan suggested by the Woodhead Commission. He intended to point out clearly that none of the expelled Palestinian leaders would be allowed to participate in the delegation. Harold Alfred MacMichael advised him not to follow this path because excluding the Mufti and his colleagues would leave the scene with no representatives but the leaders in the mountains. He added that the Arab regimes would be called upon to participate because of their collaboration tendency with British.

The British strategic interest demanded a British-friendly attitude toward the Arabs and containing the Palestinian uprising. MacDonald at that time recommended halting the Jewish immigration to Palestine in case a war broke out. Lt. Gen. Robert Hadden Haining and MacMichael believed that the implementation of the partition plan and putting end to Jewish immigration would make peace prevail in Palestine.

Some Arab Politicians shared with the British their concern about the state of violence in Palestine. In October Tawfiq As-Sweidi the Iraqi prime minister frequently visited the British Colonial Office. When the decision made by the Colonial Office to bring the Jewish immigration to a halt became apparent, both Jews and Arabs at that time felt that the British Government was just about to make concessions with the Arabs.

Before MacMichael had returned to Palestine on 4 October, a certain plan was considered by the British to put an immediate end to the Palestinian uprising. It was designed to keep the Arabs calm in case a war broke out in Europe. In October the Palestinian rebellions marched to Jerusalem where they successfully kicked the British police out of the Old City by 17 October. On the following day the British substituted the civil administration with a military won which spread to other parts of the country in less than four days. In other words, Haining began to reestablish the British role in Palestine aided by several forces. In addition to jet fighters, they employed the British police, the Jordanian Frontiers Guard force and a Jewish force composed of 6,000 soldiers. By the aid of these forces Haining succeeded in putting an end to the uprising.⁹²

⁹² Kayyali, *op. cit.*, p. 294-296.

In November of 1938, the British Government declared that it no longer insisted upon the partition plan of 1937 as the basis for resolving the Palestinian cause. This change in position could be understandable in terms of the British concern over the European domestic affairs. The situation there was running toward an explosion. The British might have also considered removing obstacles, which stood in the way of achieving a political settlement for the Palestinian cause; in other words, the division makers in London were seriously occupied with lessening tension. They sought to diminish the extent of trouble overseas, which would allow for more freedom in the effort needed by the British to overcome Europe's domestic crises.

The Arab Higher Committee received this declaration with comfort on 15 November. The committee issued its leaflet in response to the British decision. It stated that the Arab people receive with comfort Britain's adoption of these means of negotiation. That is not to ignore their acceptance of the fact that the Palestinian issue could only be resolved through political rather than military means. They also restated the need for the Arab leaders to participate in the negotiations designed to bring about a suitable resolution to the issue. The committee also reemphasized that it was the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.⁹³ The committee seemed to have sensed the possibilities of having political settlement in the very near future. It therefore attempted to suggest certain bases for holding any peace conference. It in particular tried to emphasize its inevitable role in any negotiations, despite the British disregard of its status.

In fact the British planned a peace conference in London under the name of the Round Table Conference for strategic reasons. They sent invitations to the governments of Iraq, Egypt, Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Transjordan. The representation of Palestine in the conference was to a certain extent problematic for the British Government. The selection of the Palestinian representatives consumed time and required making several contacts. By the end, the British turned to the regimes in Cairo, Baghdad and Riyadh to aid in resolving the matter and to name the Palestinian representatives who would receive personal invitations. The selection of the Palestinian representatives, the British requested, should not include members of the Arab Higher Committee, while members of the Ad-Difa' Party should be included, and thereby the representation would be included. The Mufti was to be excluded by all means.⁹⁴

⁹³ Khillih, *op. cit.*, p. 725.

⁹⁴ Darwazih, *op. cit.*, p. 236.

The Arab delegations chosen for participation in the Round Table Conference met in Cairo. They held three consecutive meetings on the 17, 19 and the 21 January 1939, wherein they agreed on the following:

First: To do the best to rescue Palestine and to keep it an Arab country.

Second: To rid Palestine from the danger of Zionism.

Third: To bring about an Arab Government for Palestine were its relationship with Britain would be decided in a treaty similar to that of the Anglo-Iraqi one.

Fourth: The national constitution for Palestine would include guarantees of rights and privileges for the Jews with respect to domestic and municipal matters. Their representation in the proposed government should proportionately reflect their number at that time.⁹⁵

The above listed principles constituted the grounds for the Arab representatives' contact and negotiations with the British in all the conference sessions. In some of these sessions some Arab representatives met the Jewish delegation headed by Weizmann. The Jews obviously asserted their right of return to their 'promised land,' which was designed to legitimize their immigration to Palestine. They also refused the idea of remaining a minority in the country. This stand by the Zionists led to the failure of the meeting.

The British finally adopted the Arab point of view regarding the resolution of the Palestinian cause. After a lengthy discourse and negotiation between the Arab representatives and the British officials, the British Government agreed on the principle to terminating the Mandate in Palestine and establishing an independent state in the country bound with the British by treaty. This would be executed in a reasonable time period. A committee was supposed to be formed to formulate a constitution for the state and to set a platform for the treaty.

Another conference in which both the Jews and the Arabs would participate was to be held to study the two projects (a constitution and the treaty) in order to finalize them. A transitional period was needed. The British expressed willingness to include Palestinians and Jews in both the executive and the consultative bodies. They called the first the 'cabinet'

⁹⁵ *Filistin*, February 1939, issue no. 202-3965.

and the other the 'state counsel.' In the first, the Palestinians were supposed to be without ministerial posts.⁹⁶

Upon reaching this point of negotiations, the British proposal became acceptable. The British also committed themselves to the implementation of the peace plan. They also did not demand the approval of the Arab and Palestinian representatives of the plan. The representatives of the three Arab countries decided to call upon the Palestinian representatives for a general meeting. They intended to present the plan before the Palestinian representatives and to encourage their acceptance of the proposal, since in their view nothing more than the British offer could be achieved at that time. They also promised their aid in inserting needed changes in the proposal later on. The British never gave the whole thing at once, but rather installed it gradually. The Palestinian representatives, therefore, were advised to be at ease with what had been offered first.⁹⁷

The meeting in Cairo attended by the Palestinian and Arab representatives came through three major sessions. The Palestinian representatives finally decided on the acceptance of the political plan conditioned by three modifications. The plan should include handing down the ministry of interior to the Palestinians, the Palestinians should handle the ministry of finance, and they should have a hand in security affairs.⁹⁸

The British did not succeed through the London conference to put forth a political settlement to the Palestinian cause. Its inability to achieve reconciliatory settlement did not bring a state of peace needed for the British to tackle European internal crises. The British Government, therefore, decided to assume the whole charge of presenting its own political settlement. This came through issuing the Malcolm MacDonald White Paper of 1939. It states that it is not part of the British policy to transform all of Palestine into a Jewish state. It did not also consider the Hussein-MacMahon correspondence as a fair pace for an Arab demand for establishing an Arab state in Palestine. Her Majesty's Government aimed in the long run at the formation of an independent Palestinian state. Both Arab and Jews would equally share the government posts and authority in a way that would preserve the vital interest of both. The formation of the Palestinian independent state would be achieved in a ten-year period. This state would be tied with the British through a treaty, which would protect in a satisfactory manner the commercial and strategic interest of the two parties.

⁹⁶ Darwazih, op. cit., p.241.

⁹⁷ *Filistin*, 3 May 1939.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

The transitional period would be used for the development of self-rule. The Jewish immigration in the following five years would be limited to 75,000 immigrants. Any further Jewish immigration later on should be conditioned by the Arab approval. In some Arab areas land sale would be prohibited and in other parts of Palestine this sale would be conditional.⁹⁹

The Arab Governments were enthusiastic about the British issuing of the White Paper. They expressed willingness to collaborate in implementing its articles. Their task, however was to convince the Palestinian representatives of this stand.¹⁰⁰

The Arab Higher Committee in fact rejected the White Paper on the grounds that it was short of complying with the minimum limit of the Palestinian aspirations and the national demands.¹⁰¹

The period under focus in this chapter, which was ended by issuing the MacDonald White Paper was the turning point in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It began with closing the curtain on the failing politics of collaboration with the British and the discrediting of the traditional leadership. The Al-Buraq incidents of 1929 culminated the years of Palestinian discontent and frustration. They also constituted a watershed in the history of the Palestinian struggle and of the national movement. Those incidents posed serious challenges to the traditional leadership and its politics. They, more importantly, dictated new terms of resisting and encountering both the British and Zionists.

The period following Al-Buraq carried a process of political polarization and grouping within the Palestinian National camp. The approach to the issue of struggle and dealing with the British and Zionists generally speaking became increasingly confrontational and involved the masses. The political Party formation, as became the main character of the period, reflected diverse political and ideological stands within the Palestinian camp. It constituted the main vehicles through which various political groups channeled their activism and portrayed their political identity. More significantly, those parties aided in transcending the leading role and activism of the traditional leaders of the era to a national uprising later on, despite the earlier discredit of their politics and their role in leading the national struggle.

⁹⁹ Kayyali, op. cit., pp. 301-302.

¹⁰⁰ *Filistin*, 7 May 1939.

¹⁰¹ *Filistin*, 19 May 1939.

The Al-Buraq incidents of 1929 set an example for the masses pioneering a national struggle, which the national uprising from 1936 to 1939 resembled, however on a wider scale. The developments preceding and following the Al-Buraq incidents planted the seeds for the outbreak of the uprising. Quantitative accumulations usually lead to qualitative jumps.

The Palestinian resistance in the period of concern was always influenced by the Palestinian ties with the Arab region through the fact that the Palestinian national movement rose and evolved as an offshoot of the Arab liberation movement. The failure of the Hashemites of both Iraq and Transjordan to maintain the Arab nationalist movement as a solid platform for Palestinian reliance in their struggle would have its serious ramifications. The Palestinians found themselves increasingly forced to rely on themselves. This reality manifested itself clearly in the outbreak of the famous national uprising.

The Palestinians implemented new means of struggle between 1936 and 1939. The Palestinians' failure to rely on the Arab liberation movement seemed to have disturbed the Arab leaders in neighboring countries and their allies in leadership in Palestine. These figures, who together acted in bringing the uprising in its two stages to an end, did not allow for the uprising to impose the terms of the settlement complaint with the British policy. In other words, the national uprising, which aimed at achieving an independence, declined to bring about more than a partition plan in 1937 and the Round Table Discussion and the White Paper in 1939. They all were dictated by British interests and designed to serve British concerns and Zionist policy.

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CONCLUSION

The study in this book underlined the major characteristics of the existing relationship between the Arab liberation movement and the Palestinian national movement. The main focus of the work is the rise and evolution of the latter as an offshoot of the former. This required the study of the two as major forces in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The investigation in this study would consider tracing the foundations of the Arab nationalist movement back as a modern phenomenon. This indeed aided in comprehending the ties and the nature of those ties between the Palestinian Nationalist and the Arab liberation movements.

The relationship between the Arab liberation and the Palestinian national movements can be understood in terms of the historical development in the mid-19th-Century Arab East. The economic transformation and social changes occurring at this time were crucial in granting political and intellectual developments. They were instrumental in creating and deepening political and intellectual diversity in the region. This in essence drove various elements and groups in the Ottoman Empire to assimilate new positions in terms of their ties with the Empire.

The people in the Arab East including the Palestinians at mid-century came under the influence of the process of restructuring administratively and judicially in terms of the existing infrastructure. The reformation plan designed to strengthen the Egyptian central authority in greater Syria employed by Ibrahim Pasha created a state of dissatisfaction and discontent for certain segments in this stage. It also put the whole society on the verge of conflict. The A'yans' loss of influence resulting from the exertion of influence by the central authority must have raised the political consciousness of this group in Greater Syria.

This consciousness manifested itself in rising opposition to Egyptian rule. This also manifested itself in the hostile attitude held by the dispossessed and dislocated A'yans toward those benefactors who proved loyalty to the Egyptians. That is neither to disregard nor to forget they declared total hostility toward Ibrahim Pasha's rule itself.

The Ottoman's attempt to echo the Egyptian experience, dictated by the Empire's entry into the world capitalist market after 1840, acted as a catalyst for increasing political consciousness and the planting of the

seeds for the formation of an Arab liberation movement. The Ottoman endeavor to strip the A'yan leaders of influence and authority, necessitated by the need to clear up the obstacles standing in the way of their employment reform measures, may explain the dissatisfaction and discontent of those leaders. This must consequently have increased their political awareness and grounded the move toward Arab nationalism.

The spreading of education, especially of the missionary and Ottoman military schooling, might have aided in the rise of intellectualism in the region and the emergence of Arab nationalism as political ideology. The desire of the A'yans to have their sons acquire education ensured that they would hold prestige posts in the Ottoman administration. This contributed to the intellectual and political movement in the latter part of the 19th and early 20th Century. One can therefore categorize Arab nationalism in its modern form as expression and intellectual and political ideology, although it was rooted in Arab history and heritage.

The Palestinian A'yans were prominent figures in the movement. Their instrumental role in the formation of the movement politically, ideologically and organizationally was evident from the start. Considering the general trends in history, one understands their role as part of a wider Arab movement. Particularism, however best served in explaining their assumption of the role of vanguard of the Palestinian national movement. This whole dualism was at the heart of the Palestinian ties with the Arab nationalist movement and the formation of the dimensional nature of the Palestinian cause.

Imperialism's advancement into the region after 1840, in pushing for an Ottoman reformation, placed the Syrian A'yan in a peculiar position; a disposition of influence and authority. The Palestinian A'yans were forced to encounter the Ottoman ideology and to assimilate an Arab nationalist ideology as an expression of an Arab identity. They were also obliged to fight the Zionist colonial immigration and settlement as a means to preserving the well being and identity of the homeland.

The Zionist immigration to and settlement in Palestine constituted threat and challenge to various identities and groups in the region. It threatened the unity and stability in the Ottoman Empire. In addition to the expropriation of parts of the Empire, the Zionists in Palestine would add new trouble to the Ottomans and form a new national dilemma for the Empire.

They should have also posed great challenge to the Arab World. This challenge came in two folds. First, Zionism in the region constituted a countering force for the Arab nationalist movement. Second, Zionism, as

formulated, was colonial settlement and served as an instrumental force in subjecting the region and preserving Western interest. At the same time it posed for the Palestinians the threat of effusion and dislocation.

The Palestinians' attempt to utilize earlier stated circumstances in gaining the Ottoman and Arab support in the struggle with Zionism did not bear fruit in the period leading up to the breakout of the World War I. The financial problems and the internal ills and conflicts in the Empire could only lead to open channels of Ottoman negotiation with Zionism, especially under the leadership of the Young Turks after the constitutional revolution of 1908. This development translated into the failure of all Ottoman attempts by Sultan Abdul Hamid II to stop the drift of Jewish immigrants and settlers into Palestine.

The Arab movement's failure to place the Palestinian issue as top priority in their agenda and the attempts of some of Arab nationalists to coordinate efforts with Zionist leaders at the time of the Arab Congress in Paris must have inspired the rise of the Palestinian national movement. The union and expression of Palestinian identity through this movement continued to act as an offshoot the Arab Liberation Movement. This is understandable in light of the Palestinian Arab mutual relationship in dealing with the threat of Zionism. In addition, the Palestinian A'yan family perception as part of a wider Arab struggle and their consciousness as part of the declined old social classes must have grounded their role in the struggle. This vision of the Palestinians was very instrumental as a driving force in their carrying out of activism up to the World War I.

Upon the breakout of the first global war in 1914, the Arab movement, including the Palestinians, found itself under the pressure of deciding with whom to ally itself. Its limited choices were clear in the fact that the Arab movement could only ally itself with the Western Allies. The declaration of an Arab revolution in June 1916 and the Arab contribution to the war effort were stimulated by the Arab hope to achieve independence and establish a united Arab commonwealth.

The war results dictated by the wartime accords (the Sykes-Picot Agreement and the Balfour Declaration) left the Arabs in despair and discontent. The despair and frustration sparked a state of mass unrest. This translated into sporadic mass uprisings in various parts of the Arab East in the years 1919 and 1920. The expression of this despair and discontent did not come through an armed struggle with the colonizers lead by a powerful liberation movement. The Arab liberation movement could not counter the colonial powers, as it was a political movement and not a military force. This failure, coupled with the nature of the movement and

its class foundations and interests led only to some of its leaders negotiating with the British. Gradually this technique was almost commonly shared in the region. The Palestinian traditional leadership, despite the peculiar character of the Palestinian cause in other parts of the Fertile Crescent, echoed their colleagues in the Arab liberation movement in their politics of negotiation and collaboration with the colonizers. This was especially in witnessing the Hashemites in both Transjordan and Iraq who through this type of politics established political entities under British Mandate.

By adopting this sort of politics the traditional leadership in Palestine could not necessarily achieve the Palestinian aspirations and demands. A collaboration with the British implied an acceptance of the British Zionist politics, and the idea of a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Such recognition would in turn lead to Palestinian expulsion and dislocation. At the same time, this must have led to the impotence of the politics of the traditional leadership and their inability to deliver on their commitments to achieve national aspirations before the Palestinian masses.

The course of political activism to which the traditional leaders subscribed drove them deeper into elitism. Consequently, they increasingly distanced themselves from the masses. Furthermore, the gaps within those groups committed to armed struggle and opposition to both the British and the Zionists steadily increased. These aspects partly contributed to the weakness, which the Palestinian national movement suffered in the second half of the 1920s.

The reliance of the Palestinian leadership on the Arab liberation movement for support in the struggle with the British and the Zionists had an impact on the Palestinian national movement. The failure of the traditional leadership to accomplish independence through peaceful means put the national movement in a critical situation. The masses gradually lost faith in the traditional leadership and its politics, and the national movement was no longer in a position to bring about events concerning the Palestinian cause. That is not to ignore the fact that the Palestinian traditional leadership's ties within the Arab nationalist movement burdened the Palestinian national movement. The mediation role played by the Palestinian traditional leaders in an attempt to resolve conflict among the Arab rulers founded on adherence to Western politics came at the expense of strengthening and solidifying the position and status of the Palestinian movement.

The divergence of various groups within the movement provided an environment for foreign intervention into the national movement and for in-

fluencing its politics. There was a deliberate attempt on the part of the British and the Zionists to manipulate politics on the basis of their knowledge of the regional, urban, social class and family structures peculiar to Arab culture. Through these basic constructs, they planted additional seeds for crippling the Palestinian national work.

The inability of the Palestinian leadership to properly vanguard the national struggle leading to the accomplishment of the national goals of independence and self-rule added to the Palestinians frustration and dissatisfaction. Their resentment toward and resistance of Jewish immigration and settlement the expropriation of Arab land led to their rising fear of the Zionist idea. The establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine was supported by the Balfour Declaration and was reinforced in the mandate enforced by the British for Palestine. This fear, coupled with the lack of an Arab and Islamic backing to the Palestinians in their struggle were responsible for the rising of critical voices of the Palestinian performance. By 1929, these circumstances played an instrumental role in provoking strong violence and driving the masses to assume the vanguard position within the national movement and the struggle with colonists.

The Al-Buraq incidents of 1929 constituted a turning point in the history of the Palestinian national movement and the struggle with the British and the Zionists. It came as a move to put an end to the discredited, impotent policies of the traditional leadership. It was also supposed to pave way for a new politics and newly energetic and revolutionary young men to lead the struggle with both the British and the Zionists. It was clear at that point that the British and Zionist interests and politics were mutually bound. A Jewish homeland in Palestine could only be realized with British support.

The discovery of oil in Iraq and Saudi Arabia in the Persian Gulf in the first half of the 1930s, brought the region into the world capitalist market. This made the political fragmentation of the nation states more acceptable as part of an emerging Arab order. The Arab rulers under British Mandate moved increasingly toward an alliance and collaborationist relationship with the Western powers. These evolving mutual interests were enhanced by the discovery of oil.

After 1932, the British became more concerned about strengthening ties with Zionism. This stand was stimulated by the British need to pump the Iraqi oil via pipelines across Palestinian soil to the Mediterranean as a step in transporting oil to Europe. They seemed to have thought of the Zionists as a friendly power, which would safeguard the British oil interests.

The Arab regimes at the same time became more occupied with domestic matters and the subscription to British policy in the region. This greatly affected the Palestinians. On one hand they found themselves obliged to deal single-handedly with both the British and the Zionists in their struggle for independence and self-rule. On the other hand, they could not wait for concrete support from the Arab rulers, because this support would embarrass them before the British.

The transitional period following the Al-Buraq incidents of 1929 up to 1936 witnessed a political polarization and regrouping as well as party formation. The previous groups established themselves ideologically and organizationally in accordance with their interests. With the exception of the class-based Al-Istiqlal Party, the other bodies were formed along family lines. The Palestinians' need to rely on themselves on the battlefield and the rise and decline of various groups must have inspired the phenomenon of party formation in the Palestinian scene. The phenomenon could be held responsible for stirring political and intellectual debate and preparing the ground for rivalry among the various groups. But their main concern was the search for the best reliable means to achieve national goals. This put all of them together either forcefully or voluntarily in opposition to the British. This formation also supplied the country with the alternative for the finally dissolved Executive Committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress.

Polarity in Palestine during this period prepared the scene for the implementation of a democratic parliamentary system, the absence of which would always leave the country at the whim of political party competition. However, in the case of Palestine, this merely established a representation of various political interest groups within the national movement. More importantly, this polarity moved the leading role of various groups, especially that of the traditional leadership, to the next stage, the era of Palestinian national uprising from 1936 to 1939.

The developments in the period under study had left the Palestinian masses with no option but to take the lead in the national struggle for independence. The Arab and the Islamic *ummahs* would not come separately or together to physically aid in resisting the colonizers in Palestine. The Palestinian traditional leadership at the same time could not evidently carry out its historical role in leading the struggle toward accomplishing independence.

The armed struggle adopted by 'Izz Ad-Din Al-Qassam and his followers in 1935, which might represent the early foundation for an Islamic front in Palestine, collapsed in its embryonic stage. The Palestinian fears of

Zionist success in installing a Jewish homeland and a state in Palestine were on the rise due to anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany and in Europe in general.

The success of the rising Syrian and Egyptian masses in forcing the French and the British to sign treaties and the intent to utilize the shaky global conditions, especially in Europe, to Palestinian ends might have contributed to the rise of the Palestinian masses in April 1936. The discontent was the catalyst for the outbreak of the Palestinian national uprising. This state of frustration translated itself in the masses' move to assume the lead in the struggle for independence.

The Arab Higher Committee formed on 25 April 1936 mirrored the political spectrum in Palestine. It was designed to act as a leading body and organizational umbrella to the uprising activities. The representation of the traditional leadership in the committee must have limited the course and the lifetime of the mass uprising due to the class interest of the leadership in utilizing the uprising as a means to achieve political ends.

This formation also paved the way for the Arab leadership in the nearby Arab countries to interfere in the uprising and to bring it finally to a halt. The ideological and political ties, in addition to the class foundation of both the Palestinian and Arab leadership, must have facilitated the role the Arab leaders played in 1936. The mutual class interest of this leadership and the British and the adherence to British policy may explain the role played by the Palestinian and Arab leadership in finally aborting the general strike in 1936.

The unsuccessful attempt by the British to realize the Zionist policy through political initiative (the partition plan of 1937) was a result of huge opposition by the Palestinian people and their leadership. This led to the outbreak of the second stage in the Palestinian national uprising.

The attempt by the Palestinian and Arab leaders through the Bludan Conference of September 1937 to maintain control over the fate of the uprising in the second stage proved relatively unsuccessful. They would not necessarily control the rebellious activities of the people. The leadership inside Palestine, which was in control of the battlefield, was not motivated by class interest, nor did the citrus cultivation season have influence over their decision making. The British war machine, therefore, played the decisive role in finally crushing the uprising.

The British strategic and political interests moved rapidly to end the Palestinian national uprising. This also grounded their concern about putting

a fourth political settlement to resolve the Palestinian-Zionist conflict over Palestine. However, the British failed to impose a political settlement on either side, Palestinian or Zionist, during the Round Table Discussion in London in 1939. The escalating tension leading up to the possible outbreak of a war in Europe forced the British to act unilaterally, and they issued the White Paper of 1939. This paper, though it seemed to have favored the Arab side, was opposed by the Palestinian leadership and subsequently rejected by some of the Arab rulers. It came at the end of an era in the Palestinian struggle for the independence. Meanwhile, it constituted a crucial turning point in terms of the Zionist British relationship and the newly emerging Zionist relationship with United States of America. The developments related to the policy of the White Paper of 1939 would have a crucial impact on the course of the history of Palestine and the Palestinian struggle with Zionism in the coming years. The year 1939 marked the end of an era in the Palestinian resistance, but it opened the way for a new one in the long road of struggle for independence.