

*The Genesis of Palestinian Resistance to Zionist Colonial Schemes
1908 - 1914*

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Abstract

In this study, the author set out to explore the genesis of Palestinian resistance to Zionist expansionist activities in Palestine within the period 1908-1914. To do so, the author traces the roots of the Palestinian question back to the commencement of the planned and structured Zionist Settlements with the consequent displacement of the local Palestinian people. The study makes it clear that the Palestinians had directed their resistance against the Zionist expansionist strategies when the Jewish presence in Palestine began changing from one of peaceful coexistence to that of a planned Zionist Colonization.

From the year 1908 onwards, the hostility of the Arab masses and the crystallisation of a nationalist, anti-zionist political consciousness became accentuated. This Seething popular discontent was combined with a press campaign waged by the rising power of the Palestinian nationalists.

In order to investigate the development of the Palestinian resistance movement, one should also comprehend the socio - political and economic situation in Palestine during the period dealt with by this study. To achieve this purpose, the author has decided that the appropriate data and material for this study should include primary sources such as: British documents, Palestinian newspaper and periodicals and other archival material.

This paper is an attempt to articulate the genesis of Palestinian resistance to Zionist expansionist strategies in Palestine within the period 1908 to 1914. It traces the roots of the Palestinian problem back to the commencement of the planned and structured Zionist settlements with the consequent displacement of the local Palestinian people. From the very beginning the Palestinians directed their hostilities towards the Zionists and their expansionist-settling designs. The Palestinian hostile attitude towards Jewish settlements did not begin to form until the Jewish presence in Palestine started to change from one of peaceful coexistence to that of a planned Zionist colonization.

Before the influx of Jewish immigrants into Palestine in the latter part of the 19th century, the number of Jews in Palestine did not exceed more than 24, 000, residing mainly in the four cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Safad and Tiberias. The Palestinian Arab population at the time was estimated at around 300,000 (Lucas, 1974:23; Zureik, 1979:31).

The year 1882 signalled the coming of the pioneers of the "Lovers of Zion" originated from Rumania and Russia (Weinstock, 1979:65) They were followed a year later by a small group of Zionist Settlers from Russia called the Billuim. The two groups formed the spearhead of the First Aliyah which lasted until 1904. The members of these groups were youthful idealists full of plans and enthusiasm. But none of them, on the other hand, had acquired any experience on farming or any notion of how to face the difficulties that lay ahead. Thus, the First Aliyah proved to be a total failure in producing the "new" breed of Jewish Settlers in Palestine. The agricultural enterprise of the First Aliyah could not sustain itself. So, the Settlers began calling for help from abroad. The answer came from an anticipated sources. It was Baron De Rothschild, a scion of the French Branch, who decided to take those Settlers under his wing. Lucas describes the experience of this group of Settlers thus: "The Settlers themselves had a capitalistic and colonialistic approach to the land and the Arab population which was seen as a reservoir of extraordinarily cheap labour. Under the influence of the Baron the Jewish enterprise assumed the flavour of the French colonisation then evolving in North Africa (Lucas, 1974:25)

The "Rothschild period" lasted until 1899 which the Baron transferred the responsibility of administering all the Jewish Settlements to the Jewish Colonisation Association (JCA) led by Baron Maurice De Hirsch. The goal of this association was "to support Jewish emigration from Europe and Asia to other parts of the world, create agricultural settlements in North and South America and obtain authorisation and autonomy for these settlements" (Zineman, 1950:177).. Baron De Hirsch donated all his fortune (1) to this new association.

With the help of both Rothschild and Hirsch, the Zionist colonisation movement was able to acquire enough momentum to survive the crisis. Had it not been for this help the colonisation movement would have been doomed to failure.

As part of the settlement strategy resulted of the Basel Conference in 1897, the

Zionist colonisation movement had adopted three strategic abjectives (Ruppin, 1926:121):

- A) The systematic promotion of the settlements of Palestine with Jewish agriculturists, artisans and craftsmen.
- B) The organization and federation of all Jewish settlements financed by the JCA.
- C) The planning for further colonisation by the (JCA).

The third objective was by far the most important for the Zionist organization.

The second major wave of Zionist immigration to Palestine (Second Aliyah) began in 1904 with the arrival of a group of young Russian Jews. This Aliyah gained momentum with the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1905. The immigrants of the Second Aliyah were mainly young Jews of petty-bourgeois origin who were unable to find work in their native countries (Vandervelde, Paris, 1929:31). In Palestine they were helped considerably by the Palestine Jewish Colonization Association (PICA) which was founded by Baron Rothschild. Between 1882-1912 it was reported that Baron Rothschild had invested more than 15 million English pounds exclusively for the development of large plantations specializing in citrus production (Zubi, 1984:94; Mandel, 1976:32).

The members of the Second Aliyah followed a "fatal decision to boycott Arab labor. An Arab peasantry could not form part of an exclusively Jewish state as the movement's leaders then conceived it; instead, Zionism created its own peasants — Jewish settlers oriented toward agriculture through special indoctrination. That these would ultimately displace, or dominate, the Palestinian fellaheen seems to have been an idea expressed both by settlers and peasants from the early days of Zionist immigration" (Sayigh, 1979:45).

In an urgent letter in 1905, the Governor of Nazareth complained to his superior Ottoman authorities that the Jews "have striven and are striving to buy most of the villages, lands, and estates in our illustrious Empire. The Jews do not mix at all with the [locals]; they also do not buy from them. They have a special bank, the Anglo-Palestine Bank, which lends the money at 1 per cent a year" (Zureik, 1979 : 39). The statement went on to "deplore the fact that Jewish settlers flew their own flag, and had their own separate schools, national anthem, and postal service, and handled all their complaints through foreign representatives in the country" (Zureik, 1976: 39).

Sultan Abdul Hamid however, was opposed to unrestricted and massive Jewish immigration. When on June 28, 1891, a memorandum was submitted to Sultan Abdul Hamid on the question of Jewish immigration to Palestine, he was repored to have written the following: "... The memorandum should be returned. It is not permissible to take a course which, by accepting those who are expelled from every place to the Imperial Countries, might result in the creation in the future of a Jewish

government in Jerusalem. It is necessary that they should be sent to America, and in that manner, they and their like should not be accepted, and should immediately be embarked on ships and sent to America. On these things and their ensuing details the Council of Ministers should reach a serious and decisive resolution, and present it to Me... Why should we accept those whom the civilized Europeans refused and expelled from their countries?" (Farhi, 1975: 192). A Week later Abdul Hamid instructed his Military Supervising Committee:

"Acceptance of status as Ottoman subjects and settlement of these Jews is most harmful, and since it might raise in the future the issue of a Jewish government, it is imperative not to accept them. Deliberate on it, upon these lines, and submit today, and quickly, this decision to Me... The Grand Vezir should be informed by a secret letter..." (Farhi, 1975: 192).

Abdul Hamid's negative attitude to Zionist colonisation continued through the nineties and the turn of the century (Farhi, 1975: 192). Nevertheless, Jewish immigration continued, and the number of Jews in Palestine was estimated by the British Consul in Jerusalem in 1907, somewhat inflated, as 100,000 in a population of half a million (F.O. 371/356, 1907).

The coming to power of the Young Turks (July 23, 1908) started a new era in the history of the Ottoman Empire. "A freedom fever swept all over the Empire, and its subject peoples came alive with new hopes and new aspirations". It became clear that certain Jewish elements played a prominent role in bringing about the Young Turk Revolution (Farhi, 1975:197). A British diplomat in Istanbul wrote several letters to his superiors in London discussing the role the Jews played in planning and setting up the clandestine meetings of the Young Turks (F.O. 371/1010/20761, 1910). In Salonica, a city with a Jewish majority, the Jews "flung themselves into the new stream with the enthusiasm of new converts" (Farhi, 1975:197). On July 11, 1911, the **Times** reported that "it was common knowledge that the Salonica Committee was set up with the help of the Donmah Jews who played a prominent role in the foundation of the Committee (Time, 11 July 1911:12).

The Zionist leaders began demanding a fundamental change in the Ottoman policy towards Jewish settlements in Palestine. Their demands included the right to live an autonomous life free of all interventions in their internal affairs. They also included the abolition of all restrictions on immigration, purchase of land and establishment of new settlements. On March 24, 1909 Sultan Abdul Hamid was deposed by the Young Turks who appointed Mohammad Rashad as the new Sultan. It was a well-known fact that Sultan Abdul Hamid was strongly apposed to unrestricted Jewish immigration to Palestine and the Ottoman Empire since the 1880s. Moreover, many leading Zionist youths moved to Istanbul in order to be able to take an "active part in Ottoman politics and to struggle to achieve their national goals" (Farhi, 1975: 197). Gad Frumkin; David Ben-Gurion, later Prime Minister of Israel; Izhak Ben-Zvi, later President of Israel; David Remez (Drabkin), later Minister of Communications; Moshe Sharett (Shertock), later Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Af-

fairs, and many others found their way to Istanbul under the cover of pursuing their higher education (Ibid.:198). Ben-Zvi defined the aim of their presence in Istanbul saying: "We must understand that a new era has emerged in Zionism. The centre of our activities must be transferred under the pressure of reality, to the East ... We should negotiate with the Ottoman government and parliament..." (Ben-Zvi, 1965:135).

After the Young Turk Revolution, the treasury of the Ottoman Empire was already under a great deal of strain. Many Ottoman officials believed that the Zionists had influence and power over the European financial institutions. The Zionists, however, were willing to make use of this situation. They agreed to raise the necessary funds required by the Ottoman treasury, in return for the relaxation of the Ottoman Government's campaign against Jewish immigration to Palestine. In a letter to his Foreign Minister, G. Lowther, the British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, described the new Turkish Government as a "bilateral Jewish-Turkish union," whereby the "Turks provided military strength; the Jews provided brain, adventure, money and a strong influential media in Europe" (F.O. 424/224, 1910).

By September 1908 the Zionist organization appointed Dr. Victor Jacobson (a Russian Jew and member of the Zionist Executive Committee) as its representative to assume the leadership of the Permanent Zionist Bureau in Istanbul under the cover of a small banking firm called Anglo—Levantine Banking Company. Upon his appointment, Dr. Jacobson immediately initiated contacts with Ottoman Jewish leaders, and with their help and support he began propagating Zionism among the Jewish communities in Istanbul and other Turkish cities. He subsidized a paper in French, *Jeune-Turc*, co-edited by a Palestinian Jew, Sami Hochberg, and a well-known Turkish journalist, Celal Nuri (Mandel, 1976: 93).

In the early years of the 20th Century, the Jewish immigration to Palestine consisted of two types of immigrants:

A) Immigrants who had brought with them the ideological fervour with which they hoped to rectify the shattered efforts of earlier settlers. Their sole aim was establishing a "National Home" for the Jews. Like every colonising society, those Zionist settlers had to shape a "definite policy towards the indigenous population. Here we come to the specific feature of Zionism which distinguishes it from all other colonizations of modern times. Zionism wanted not simply the resources of Palestine, but the country itself to serve for the creation of a new national state" (Farhi, 1975: 198).

B) Jewish adventurers who had come searching for gold and wealth. To them Palestine had been another "New World" full of fortunes and opportunities. Obviously they had been misinformed and made to believe that Palestine was mostly empty and uninhabited. Soon after they discovered that Palestine had its own people, many of these adventurers decided to leave Palestine.

Local Arab attitude towards Jewish immigration ranged from suspicion and rejection to violence (Barghouthi and Totah, 1923:257). It was obvious from the beginning that there must be a reaction from the indigenous Palestinian Arabs towards the massive Jewish immigration. Christian elements among the Palestinians were the first, according to Mandel, to form opposition to Zionist Colonization (Mandel 1976:81). They were the "fierce competitors of the Jewish middle classes... merchants, money—lenders, civil servants, interpreters" (Weinstock, 1979:78).

There is a tendency among the Zionist historians to deal with the Palestine problem by invoking the "diversity of ethnic and religious sub-divisions in order to demonstrate that it is a meaningless question" (Weinstock, 1979: 79). The country was "deserted and depopulated. The small population of the towns and villages belonged to dozens of religious, linguistic and national sects..." To quote another Zionist author, "It is a land without a people for a people without a land" (Les Temps Modernes, Aug., 1959:326). The argument of the Zionist leader Tschlenow is rather strange: "It is true," he says, "that the number of Arabs in Palestine is higher than the number of Jews by about half a million, but on the whole Jews and Arabs today comprise no more than 10 to 15 per cent of the population which formerly inhabited Jewish Palestine. The country is therefore uninhabited and awaits those who will colonise it and regenerate it" (Tschlenow, 1917: 18-19).

The appearance of Arab nationalists in Palestinian politics introduced a new element into Zionist—Arab relations. "The Arab nationalist movement", wrote Y. Roi; "was not organized within a single framework, with a generally recognized leader or unanimously accepted policy and the official active members of the various groups have been shown to have been very small" (Roi, 1982:52). Yet it gradually became clear that the Zionists had no longer to deal with the Arabs of Palestine alone "but with an Arab nationalist movement", and that worked for an extensive Arab unity of which Palestine was only a small but most important part of all. The realization of a political Arab national revival, however, caused a frustrating chaos among those Zionists who were attempting to "reach a modus vivendi with the Arabs" (Roi, 1982:52).

The peasants were the backbone of Palestinian resistance to Zionist immigration. From the very beginning they felt that the Zionists had been planning to take over their country. Their outbreaks were not only the result of the actual purchase by Zionists of Arab land in Palestine, but also of its implementation. Although a significant part of Palestinian land was owned by Arab absentee landowners, the peasants enjoyed the traditional rights of pasture and other aspects of every day life in this land. When the Zionist colonists came to settle on the land they purchased, the peasants confronted them with conflict and resistance. "Zionists often try to justify these actions by stressing how the Jewish settlers brought new agricultural innovations with them, and how the settlers farmed the land more efficiently and productively. Be as it may, it certainly does not detract from the gravity of a situation where "the original inhabitants were unwillingly evicted from their homes where they had lived and worked all their lives, and left to somehow survive with little or no resources or skills to make a living" (Darwaza, 1986).

A new Arab awakening was evolving from an educated Arab elite which was seeking through an intellectual revival to gain Arab national rights, and to restore to the Arabs their deserved status in the hierarchy of the Ottoman Empire. Zionist expansionism posed an obstacle for the Palestinian Arabs in their struggle for national rights since it threatened to take over lands in Palestine leaving the Palestinians with no land of their own. (Darwaza, 1986).

Among the first Arab writers who understood the dynamics of e both Arab nationalism and opposition to Zionism was Najib Azoury.² Writing in 1905, he published his book: **Le reveil de la Nation Arabe dans l'Asie Turque**. In it he portrayed remarkable foresight when he predicted a conflict between the national Arab awakening and the Zionist movement. "Two important phenomena, of the same nature but opposed, which have still not drawn anyone's attention are emerging at this moment in Asiatic Turkey," says Azoury. "They are the awakening of the Arab nation and the latent effort of the Jews to reconstitute on a very large scale the ancient kingdom of Israel. Both these movements are destined to fight each other continually until one of them wins. The fate of the entire world will depend on the final result of this struggle between these two peoples representing two contrary principles" (Azoury, 1905:V).

Azoury's words were remarkable. He wrote them in 1905, and they still hold true today. Later on in his book, Azoury expresses an awareness of the Zionist design to re-establish their "Ancient Homeland" which would encompass as its "natural boundaries:"

"... Jabal al- Shaikh including the sources of the Jordan River and the Barada Valley from the North, with the lands between Rashia and Saida as a front, the Suez Canal and the Sinai Peninsula from the South, the Arabian Peninsula in the East, and the Mediterranean in the West..." (Azoury, 1905: V). Perhaps closer attention should be heeded to Azoury's findings by the Arab World today, for this "ancient Jewish Homeland" encompasses parts of today's Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and the Arabian Gulf.

There emerged in the summer of 1909, another organized Arab opposition to the Zionist movement. A group of Arab thinkers in Haifa headed by Najib Nassar formed a literary club calling it "al-Muntada al-Adabi." The Club played an important role in gathering Arab students and leaders together. It was a starting point for active unified Arab thought, and a base for rebellious ideas. The aims were overtly nationalist and secretly anti-Zionist (Mandel, 1976: 219). Soon afterwards, another society "al-Qahtaniyya" was formed. It was a secret Arab nationalist society founded in Constantinople in 1909 (Antonius, 1938:10). Its aim was the formation of a Turkish-Arab Empire modelled on the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Naturally, this society had to be clandestine in choosing its members since absolute secrecy from the Ottoman authorities was essential. Alas, the movement broke up one year after its formation because one of its members betrayed it to the Ottoman authorities. (Darwaza, 1986).

A national party was set up in Jaffa in May, 1911. Suleiman al-Taji al-Farouqi founded al-Hizb al-Watani al-'Uthmani (The Patriotic Ottoman Party) to develop all that was beneficial to the Arab people, for coordinating and directing all efforts to a credible opposition to Zionism, and for provoking the people into awareness of the grave consequences of Zionism. "We do not deny," wrote one of its members, "that the main reason for its establishment is the feeling of its members and founders that the country is in danger and that a flood threatens to engulf it, and has almost put an end to its political and economic life, and that threat is the Zionist Organization" (Falastin, 20 sept. 1911). The party also drew up a list of the obligations of the Ottoman Government towards its Arab subjects asking for the following:

1. The prohibition of Jewish immigration by applying the red passport system (a system designed to stop the flow of Jewish immigration into Palestine under guise of tourism). Jewish tourists would submit their original Passports upon entering Palestine and be issued a red Passport for the duration of their stay. Upon leaving the country, they would retrieve their original passports.
2. The prohibition of land sales.
3. Holding a complete survey of the Jews and issuing them clear Ottoman identity cards.
4. Monitoring the Jewish schools, and enforcing the use of the official syllabus.
5. No closed private meetings could be held unless with prior permission from the authorities.
6. Surveying the Jewish settlement lands, imposing the various taxes on them while re-evaluating the sums that should have been paid over the years. (al-Mufid, 19 Aug 1911; Darwaza, 1986).

The Young Arab Society (Jamiyyat Al-Fatat Al-Arabiyya) and its front organization the Arab Independence Party (Hizb Al-Istiqlal Al-Arabi) were formed in Paris in 1911, and established their headquarters in Syria two years later. Al-Fatat focused on Syria and Palestine while another secret society the Covenant (Al-Ahd) devoted its attention to the affairs of Iraq. Arab independence was the primary objective of these secret societies. They managed to maintain their cover and discipline well (Al-Kayyali, 1973:54-56). Al-Fatat was concerned with the future of Palestine. Many Palestinians joined the Society. Among the leading Palestinian members of the Society were (Sa'id, n.d.: 8-11):

'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi (Nablus)

Zaki al-Tamimi (Nablus)

Hafiz Kan'an (Nablus)

Mohammad 'Izzat Darwazah (Nablus)

Rushdi al-Imam al-Husayni (Jerusalem)

Mu'in al-Madi (Haifa)

Rafiq al-Tamimi (Nablus)

Mohammad 'Ali al-Tamimi (Nablus)

Sidqi Milhis (Nablus)

Ibrahim Hashim (Nablus)

Mohammad al-'Afifi (Jerusalem)

Rushdi al-Shawwa (Gaza)

According to C. E. Dawn, there were at least 32 leading Palestinian members of the various Arab nationalist societies on the eve of World War I (Dawn, 1912:148-149).

In June, 1913 the First Arab Congress was held in Paris and many residents of Arab countries sent telegrams and letters of support. Of the 387 names which appeared as signatories of these expressions of support, 130 were Palestinians (Al-Mu'tamar al-'Arabi al-Awwal, 1913:26, 122, 123, 164). Among the leading Arab personalities who attended the First Arab Congress were:

Abd Al-Ghani Al-Arisi	Mohammed Tabbara
Jamil Mardam	Ahmed Tabbara
Shukri Ghanem	Awni Abd Al-Hadi
Charles Dabbas	Nudra Matran
Tawfic Fayed	Jamil Ma'alouf
Salim Slam	George Samneh
Khalil Zinieh	Mukhter Bayham
Tawfic Sweidi	Ayyoub Thabet
Suleiman Anbar	Albert Sursuq
Abd Al-Hamid Zahrawi	Iskandar Ammoun

The organized Arab opposition was focusing on the formation of the clubs and the formation of the reform committees, while the continued Jewish immigration to Palestine gradually became the main topic on Palestinian People's minds and occupied a significant portion of the main Arab press of the day (Darwaza, 1986). Al-Asma'i appeared in Jaffa at the end of 1908. It criticized Jewish immigration from a "position of what has been called local patriotism" (Mandel, 1976: 81). It was resentful of "the privileges which the immigrants enjoyed under the capitulations and regarded the Jews as a threat to the local population" (Mandel, 1976: 81). They "harm the local population and wrong them by relying on the special rights accorded to foreign powers in the Ottoman Empire and on the corruption and treachery of the local administration. Moreover, they are free from most of the taxes and heavy impositions on Ottoman subjects. Their labour competes with the local population and creates their own means of sustenance, The local population cannot stand up to their competition" (Mandel, 1976: 81).

Al-Asma'i proposed that—all Arabs must adopt a policy of boycotting foreign goods (especially Jewish) and promoting local production i. e. commerce and industry (Mandel, 1976: 81.).

Another anti—Zionist Arab periodical *Nahdat al-Arab* appeared in Paris. "It waged a severe attack on the Zionists and accused them of having strong links with the Freemasons," (Darwaza, 1986). In its fifth issue, it reported that the Donmah Jews and the Freemasons all shared some common interests with the CUP since these groups all seem to have collaborated together in influencing the new Young

Turk regime. (F.O. 371/561, 1909). In its Sixth issue, the periodical wrote that the final aim of the Jews to establish a Jewish State in Palestine on the ruins of the Ottoman Empire (Mandel, 1976 :82). "Turkish and Arab Muslims," wrote the periodical, "will not be able in any circumstances to live in peace and quiet, and enjoy freedom and equality in a constitutional state based on a Muslim Caliphate. And what will happen then? The Turkish and Arab Muslims will rebel against the free-thinkers, disputes will break out between them, and then the Great Powers will intervene and protect Jewish interests. This will lead to conflicts and hatred between the different elements in the Empire. Order will break down; the rulers will be lost; and the Jews will finally achieve their desire" (Mandel, 1976: 82).

The most active and vocal Arab anti-Zionist press during this period was Haifa Newspaper Al-Karmel. The moving spirit behind it was Najib Al-Khuri Nassar. He was born in Tiberias as a Protestant of Greek Orthodox Origin. He founded Al-Karmel with the express purpose of "writing against the Jewish newcomers in Palestine so that the Arabs would continue attached to their lands and refrain from selling it to the Jews (Ha-Herut: 4 Nov. 1910). The Jews, on the other hand, were trying their best to distort Nassar's image and disrupt his efforts by persistently complaining about his newspaper anti-Zionist policy. Al-Karmel was shut down twice within one year, in June 1909 and in February 1910 for actively encouraging opposition to Zionism (Al-Kayyali, 1973:60).

A fierce journalistic campaign by Arab journalists followed, and for once it seemed to have positive results. A new trend was noted on the part of the Ottoman authorities to strengthen and implement the laws regarding Jewish immigration to Palestine. In spite of this change in the law, Jewish immigration into Palestine continued unabated" (Darwaza, 1986).

The anti-Zionist Campaign that Al-Karmel had started found an echo in Syria and other places. Rasid Rida wrote several articles in Al-Manar discussing the dangerous plans of Zionism regarding Palestine and the Arab East. Al-Mu'ayyad published an article by an anonymous writer talking about Zionist ambitions which would continue and grow "...until they possess enough influence and control to form an independent Zionist Government within the Ottoman Government" (al-Muqtabas, 14 Aug. 1910). The writer continued by denying the Zionists' claims of their benefitting the country and reviving the land by introducing agricultural reforms and modern methods, saying that "any benefits reaped are solely their own." The writer continues "by blaming the Arab population for its ignorance and negligence, and points out the tricks that the Jews have used to gain land and to force the land-dwellers to flee..." (al-Muqtabas 14 Aug. 1910).

Al-Muqtabas was founded and edited by Mohammed Kurd Ali who became a major literary figure in the Arab world. Its articles focused on the Zionist advanced methods of agriculture and Zionists' paramilitary methods of education. The articles appealed to the Palestinians and their fellow Arabs to "unite in word and deed" as

their Zionist enemies had been doing since their arrival. Soon afterwards, al-Karmel and al-Muqtabas covered the events of the national Jewish festivities that were held in Jerusalem. "Zionist flags were carried high, the Zionist national anthem was sung, and Zionist stamps were sold." Al-Karmel described all of these events noting that, "many more events of the sort will take place while the Palestinians sit by idly wasting their time" (Al-Muqtabas, 14 Nov. 1910).

The anti-Zionist campaign waged by the Arab press in the Spring of 1912 was highly intensified. A new Palestinian paper appeared in the course of events by the name of Al-Munadi. It adopted a frankly anti-Zionist line of policy throughout its whole existence. Influenced by Najib Nassar, the Lebanese paper Al-Rai al-Am joined the campaign against Zionism. In an article entitled "The Ten Dangers of Zionism," al-Rai al-Am predicted how Zionist Jews would "take over all the sensitive and vital professions, and would exert their influence to eventually control all the strategic posts of Palestine. Thus by first controlling Palestine's economy, they would then control its politics" (Al-Kayyali, 1973: 66). Al-Muqtabas published a similar article stating that "Zionist aims were the destruction of the roots of Arab economy and politics" (al-Muqtabas, 25 December, 1912).

Falastin began to appear in Jaffa in 1911 adopting the staunchest anti-Zionist line. In August, 1912, it stated that "Jewish immigrants by now owned thirty settlements and / or villages, and that Jewish immigration was continuing at a frightening rate, and that Hebrew was slowly but surely becoming the official language of Palestine de facto." It continued urging the Arabs "to wake up to the danger that is staring them right in the eyes before it becomes too late and disaster strikes" (Falastin, 23, Aug. 1912). In an open letter sent by Palestinian leaders to the Sultan, and published in Falastin, the signatories stated: "We would rather die defending our people and properties, than emigrate from our country to unknown places and die from starvation" (Falastin., 5 June, 1913). Several days later Falastin published an article saying that what our "beloved people" need is the privilege of independence but "we dare not declare that publicly" (Falastin., 26 June, 1913). In the same issue, another article stated that "words and slogans are no match for the capital, education, enthusiasm and national unity which the Zionist Jews possess in abundance. Only action can stand up to action." The writer proposed the formation of a "national company for land, which was to be financed by a number of wealthy Palestinians, whose aim would be to buy up areas of uncultivated land and pressure the government into prohibiting land sales". He went on to call for unity and cooperation among the Palestinians in defending their country (Falastin., 30 June, 1913).

From that time onwards the Palestinians began to reflect an awareness of their right to self-rule in their country. In their view the foreign Jews should not be allowed to establish a geographical base in Palestine in order not to turn the country into a Jewish state. The Palestinians turned to their "fellow Arabs" calling for unity and coordinated well planned efforts to rescue their country. The Zionists, on the other hand, were trying to influence the Ottomans and portray the Jewish settlements in Palestine as "a protective cushion" for Ottomans in Palestine.

Ibrahim Al—Najjar, a well—known lebanese journalist who had strong connections with the Arab nationalists wrote a letter on January 25, 1913 to Haqqi Al—Adhem in Cairo in which he said that “the current Ottoman Government is a gang of thieves backed by Zionist Jews”. He asked him to have this letter published in every Egyptian newspaper, so that all the Egyptian people would discover the real facts (Qasmiyya 1973:154-155).

Arab press accused the Ottoman Unionists of harbouring anti—Arab feelings. Animosity towards the Unionists reached its highest among Syrians and Palestinians. They accused the Unionists of having their “Loyalty to Zionism” (al—Manar, February, 1913). As for the Palestinian press it was constantly emphasizing various Zionist activities such as: “trying to monopolize the commerce in urban areas, expanding the number of Hebraic papers (There were six in Jerusalem alone), building new Hebraic schools of different levels, the existence of specialized companies whose sole concern was buying up lands in Palestine and reallocating them to the Jewish settlers, providing capital for the settlers, the exclusive employment of Jewish laborers among each other, the autonomy of the settlements whereby each one had its own civil court, financial administration, post office, and its own armed forces of guards” (Al-Karmel, 21 Feb. 1913). Al-Muqtabas wrote on July 10, 1913 that if lands continued to be transferred to the Jewish settlers, “soon all of Palestine will consist of Jewish settlements” (Al-Muqtabas, 10 July 1913). Al-Karmel, on the other hand, stated that “Zionist ambitions would not cease with the formation of a Jewish State in Palestine, they stretched to encompass the whole region of the Near East.” Al-Karmel even went as far as attacking Arab leaders. It expressed its “amazement and wonder about how the big title-owners and seekers of imaginary leadership did not fear a horrible fate and punishment” (Al-Karmel, 8 July, 15 Aug. 1913). In another issue, al—Karmel called on the people to “write and to form committees for the unification of the local population, and for elevating their economic and social standards and to establish “national companies and gain the rights that would enable them to keep their capital inside the country for local settlements” It also called for the establishment of “academic institutions as a primary means of reform” (Al—Karmel, Feb, 1913).

To the surprise of many Palestinians, some members of the Arab Decentralisation Party considered the possibility of negotiating with the Zionists. The subsequent negotiations and efforts to convene a Jewish—Arab Conference in 1914 ended up with total failure providing only a temporary decrease in Arab press attacks. Eventually, these people came to realize that the Zionists would let nothing stand in the way of achieving their final target, an exclusively Jewish Palestine.

On the eve of WWI the Zionist movement was facing a dilemma: of either to try to convince the Ottoman Government that a massive Jewish immigration to Palestine would counter-balance the Arab population and protect Ottoman interests there, or whether to form an alliance with the Arabs themselves. It is doubtful that the Zionists dwelt on this dilemma for long, (Darwaza, 1986). Zionists were well aware that there was little room for compromise on the issues of immigration and land purchase. They were totally convinced that sooner or later they were going to establish

their own state. Zionists were never indecisive as to the required course of action needed to be taken when their interests were at stake. The Palestinians, on the other hand, were not willing to consider any compromise regarding the issues of immigration and land purchase. Perhaps had they understood the real motives of the Zionists, they might have perceived the Zionist danger earlier and acted accordingly, thus avoiding the disastrous fate of Palestinians today.

In 1914 The younger generation of Palestinians had by then realized and accepted the fact that their elders had failed in their attempts at containing the Zionist threat; they therefore decided to do something themselves. The first step they took was to form anti-Zionist organizations in and out of Palestine. On May 15, 1914, al-Karmel reported that "the Palestinian students of al-Azhar in Cairo formed an Anti-Zionist Committee" (Al-Karmel, 15 May 1914). The Nabulsi students of the American University in Beirut formed Al-Shabiba Al-Nabulsiyya (Nabulsi Youth Committee) (Al-Karmel., 29 May, 1914) This same committee formed a branch in Nablus; it was supposed to be a literary committee with the aim of helping needy students by granting them scholarships for studying at their expense. It also aimed at spreading sentiments of brotherhood and cooperation among Palestinian youths (Al-Karmel., 23 June 1914; Darwaza, 1986).

An Islamic Committee was set up in Istanbul to try to stem the Zionist tide and to buy up lands rather than see them fall into Zionist hands (Al-Karmel, 14 July, 1914). In Cairo a "Committee of Resistance to Zionists" was formed in July, 1914 (Al-Karmel., 19 July 1914). It was made up of Syrian and Palestinian youths; its aim was to link the Palestinians to the rest of the Arab world and to make joint decisions regarding resistance to Zionism in all the Arab countries in general and in Palestine specifically. At its first meeting, the Committee decided to distribute a pamphlet outlining the achievements of Zionism in the past thirty years. It also pointed out the vital posts of the country that were endangered, and the government's deliberate disregard of Zionist expansion. It finally called on the public to firmly grasp and hold on to the remaining areas of the country that were still in their possession (Al-Karmel, 19 July 1914).

As for those among the Arab intelligentsia who had previously attached their hopes for independence to the Young Turk movement, they now turned towards Britain, for help to realize their national aspirations. What those Arabs had failed to understand time and again was the fact that nobody helps anybody for free. No one would go out of his way to help someone else unconditionally. This is especially true on the level of nations. "All the Arabs needed to do was take one look at Britain's long history of colonization all over the world to realize that they would merely be moving from under one foreign power to another". (Darwaza, 1986).

The Palestinians, however, were able to play an important role in creating a general awareness among the Arabs in recognizing the dangers of Zionism and its expansionist designs. The Zionists, on the other hand, gave little considerations to their problem with the Palestinians. It seems that this was derived from their sense of

contempt for natives of the Orient. "Most Europeans and Americans before World War 1 seem to have been primarily concerned with the aspects of the movement that had impact on their own local organizations and federations. Insofar as the considerations were political, they did not include the Arabs" (Sayigh 1979:44). Violence often erupted, between the Palestinian peasants and the Zionist newcomers. The Palestinians and the rest of the Arabs in general tried to form various committees to combat Zionism, but it was not conducted according to a coordinated well-planned effort. "The Palestinians mostly reacted; they rarely took the initiative to start something according to a long-term plan. That is not to say that the Palestinians are to be blamed totally for their lack of foresight; very few people could have predicted the massive scale of Jewish immigration to Palestine, the buying up or simply taking over of lands in Palestine and the organized and planned formation of Jewish settlements on them." (Darwaza, 1986).

All parties actively connected with the problem of Palestine came gradually and clearly to the conclusion that the Arabs were no longer able to tolerate Zionist colonization activities in their country. There was no practical ground for any long-term agreement between Arabs and Zionists. An eventual armed conflict between them was inevitable. Very little real effort was exerted on the Jewish insurgence to Palestine. Through well-planned efforts and coordinated actions, the Zionists, however, were able to transform their colonization movement in Palestine into a "Jewish Homeland" in 1917 and a "State of Israel" in 1948.

Notes

* author would like to express his gratitude and appreciation for the help given to him by Miss Hana Darwaza,

(1) 200 million gold-standard francs (Zineman, op. cit.: 177).

(2) A Lebanese Maronite who had served in Jerusalem until his exile to Cairo and Paris in 1904.

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