

and bold, ambitious plans were required. . . We the Arabs need to rely upon ourselves and to stop expecting everything from the Government'.

The Palestinians were discovering that the Government was not very keen on protecting them from the Zionist danger. Calls for organisation found receptive ears. After the second debate on Zionism in Parliament, Nassar drew the attention of the readers of *al-Karmal* to the lax manner in which entry restrictions and regulations were enforced by the Ottoman authorities in Haifa. He succeeded in setting up a citizen's watch committee, which was successful in gaining permission from the *Mutasarrif* of Acre to supervise the disembarkation of Jews from all ships docking at Haifa in order to see that the entry restrictions were fully implemented. Nassar's efforts left an imprint on a number of Arab journalists, like *'Isa al-'Isa* of *Falastin* and 'Izzat Darwaza, the writer-politician who played a role in the Arab national movement in Palestine as we shall see later on.

Opposition to Zionism found some expression in literary works like *al-Sahir wa al-Yahudi* (The Wizard and the Jew) by Is'af Nashashibi, March 1909, and *Fatat Sahyun* (The Young Girl of Zion) by Ma'rif al-Arna'ut, November 1911.

By the beginning of 1912 the Zionists were already speaking of 'the spirit of enmity which has begun to gain a foothold among the masses in the Mutasarriflik of Jerusalem'.²²

The anti-Zionist campaign in the Arabic press continued unabated. *Al-Munadi*, a newspaper which began to appear in Jerusalem in the spring of 1912, was candidly anti-Zionist from its first issue. An article by Muhammad Salah al-Samadi al-Husseini of Jerusalem in *al-Ra'i al-'Am* declared that the dangers of Zionism and Jewish immigration were ten-fold. Zionist-inspired Jewish immigration would lead to: Jewish settlement in places of the greatest commercial and strategic importance; the sale of the local population's houses and land; the loss of the most valuable land; the return of the Jew's money to their own pockets through places of entertainment and the like which they would open for the Arabs; the subjugation of the local population to the Jews; the usurpation of all educational affairs by Zionist schools; the theft of industry and trade by Zionist banks and institutions; the defeat of the most powerful Arab leaders; and finally, the economic domination of Palestine through which political power would be generated.²³ Echoing the tone of this article *al-Muqtabas* alleged in its issue of 25 December 1912, that 'Zionism sought to destroy the totality of our economics and politics'.

Falastin, which was on its way to becoming the foremost anti-

Zionist paper, informed its readers, in its issue of 28 August 1912, that active immigrants own thirty colonies or villages, that immigration is proceeding at a terrific pace and that Hebrew will become the official language of the country someday. The Zionists have advanced schools and numerous important newspapers and have powerful societies backing them. The article concluded by exhorting the Arabs of Palestine to wake up to prevent a catastrophe before it is too late. Three days later the same paper called for the unity of all Palestinians to combat the Zionist danger.

Among the Ottoman provinces Palestine alone was free of the prevailing strife and tension between Muslim and Christian Arab communities due to the Balkan War. The relations between the two communities in Palestine were remarkably good owing to solidarity against the common Zionist danger.²⁴

On 17 November 1912, *Falastin* published an article accusing the *Mutasarrif* of complicity in selling lands to the Jews in the face of Arab opposition and widespread protest. By the end of 1912 *Falastin* was so outspoken against Zionism that *ha-Herut's* correspondent in Jaffa called for its boycott.

The pace was set for 1913 by *al-Karmal* in an editorial of 3 January. That editorial dealt with the general political situation as well as giving an evaluation of the outcome of the paper's four-year campaign against Zionism. It referred to the efforts of some Arab deputies like Shukri al-'Assaly and Ruhi Khalidi in particular to combat Zionism in debates in the Ottoman Parliament. Then it proceeded to attack other leaders who, while pretending to safeguard the national interests, were in fact indulging in brokerage and sales of land to the Zionists. The article concluded by stating that 'a good number of enlightened people, journalists and (local) government officials, recognised the menacing Zionist danger and were fighting this danger with us'.

Throughout the summer of 1913 Syria witnessed a general campaign of protests against the sale of state lands in Beisan to the Jews. In June *Falastin* published two telegrams from the leaders of the villages and tribes of Beisan addressed to the Sultan and the *Vali* of Beirut. In these telegrams the inhabitants explained that the lands in question were usurped from them and registered in the name of the previous Sultan and that the state was now contemplating selling it to foreigners. The telegram reminded the Sultan that it was the duty of the ruling authorities to safeguard the interests of their subjects whom they taxed and conscripted: 'We prefer to die defending our nation and our possessions rather than emigrate to unknown destinations and perish from