

organisers:

Mobilize public opinion so that you can achieve these objectives. You should not blame the Zionists as much as you should blame the leaders of your country and government officials who sell them lands and act as their brokers. Prevent those selling and you will halt the Zionist Movement.

The Summons revealed that as the Palestinians lost hope of any Government action against Zionist encroachment they moved towards self-organisation and self-reliance.

During the first seven months of 1914, the Palestinian Arab press played a key role in mobilising public opinion and preparing the ground for organisational and concerted action against the Zionists. The press assiduously denounced, 'Those rich and influential people who were blinded by self interest; they do not see the encircling Zionist danger, and preferred to have a golden present at the expense of a dark future for their sons'.³⁶ The same article warned that, 'he who controls the land and the economy is the real master, and the political sovereign is merely his vassal'.

On 2 April 1914, *Falastin* published an article on 'The Zionist Danger and the Arab Press' where it expressed gratification on witnessing a general anti-Zionist campaign in Cairo, Beirut and Damascus. *Falastin* paid tribute to the pioneering role of *al-Karmal* 'in the patriotic struggle' against Zionism, which was taken up soon afterwards by *Falastin* itself as well as *al-Muqtabas*, *al-Ra'i al-'Am*, *Fatat al-'Arab* and *al-Islah* successively. The article alleged that the few papers that failed to participate in the anti-Zionist campaign were receiving material benefits from the Zionist Movement. The writer of the article was apparently impressed by the participation of the prestigious *al-Hilal* magazine of Cairo in the fight against Zionism and referred to the long article published by it on the autonomous and totally insulated life led by the Jewish colonists in their settlements. The writer also acknowledged the role of *al-Iqdam* which was the keenest of all in exposing the Zionist danger and stirring public opinion on the issue:

The Electoral Platform of 1914

Al-Iqdam was a weekly paper published in Egypt in 1914; the editor was Muhammad al-Shanti, a Palestinian. For all intents and purposes, *al-Iqdam* was a paper devoted to Palestinian affairs and was endowed with a certain immunity on Palestinian issues, since Egypt was not

under Ottoman control. From the outset *al-Iqdam* sought to make the Zionist danger the heart of the matter in Palestinian public and political life. It invited debate and attention through a series of interviews with the notables and political personalities. It was instrumental in bringing to the fore the Zionist danger as the main issue in the Parliamentary elections of 1914. On the 22 March 1914, *al-Iqdam* published three interviews with Sa'id Husseini, Ragheb Nashashibi and Salim Husseini.

Sa'id Husseini pledged, if elected, to continue the fight against Zionism in Parliament as he had done in the past. He advocated the improvement of the *fellah's* condition and providing him with ownership titles to the land he looks after in order that he may cling to it and never give it up. He criticised the government for not fighting Zionism, which was a political as well as an economic peril, and warned that negligence would lead to grave consequences.

Ragheb Nashashibi, another incumbent Parliamentary candidate, called for special legislation aimed at the prevention of Zionist acquisition of land in Palestine. He resented the fact that many Zionists were non-Ottoman subjects who exploited the Capitulations, did not speak Arabic, and 'looked at our sons and brethren with contempt'. He pledged to fight Zionism and Zionists without injuring the feeling of Ottoman Jews.

Salim Husseini expressed admiration for the Zionists and called for their emulation. He also advocated special legislation to prohibit all land sales.

A week later, *al-Iqdam* published an interview with Khalil Sakakini, 'one of the founders of the Constitutional School in Jerusalem where the spirit of antagonism to Zionist colonialism was being propagated'. In the course of the brief interview Sakakini submitted a profound statement on the nature of the Zionist challenge:

The Zionists want to own Palestine, that is, the heart of the Arab countries and the middle link between the Arab peninsula and Africa. Thus, it appears as if they want to break the chain and divide the Arab Nation (*al-Ummah al-Arabiyyah*) into two sections to prevent its unification and solidarity. The people should be conscious that it possesses a territory and a tongue, and if you want to kill a nation cut her tongue and occupy her territory and this is what the Zionists intend to do with the Arab Nation.

Another political personality, Faydi 'Alami warned that if matters continued to take the same course, 'The Zionists would own the