

country and we would be aliens'.

Jamil Husseini put the whole problem, including the dilemma of the notables, in a nutshell:

Resisting Zionism is a priority because it is harmful to the inhabitants of the country and aims at dispossessing them of their lands. But how can we resist it and fight it when the Government lends it backing and support, and when the inhabitants are simple ignorant people. The Government employees are working in the direction of facilitating a Zionist takeover.

At about the same time a number of notables from Jerusalem, Jaffa and Gaza appealed to the members of *al-Muntada al-Adabi* in Constantinople and to the Turkish newspaper *Pyam*. The appeal spoke of the plight of the Palestinian peasant, as well as the merchant and the Government employee, because of Zionist designs and influence. 'If sincere people did not come to the rescue of the Palestinians', the appeal asserted, 'their fate will be similar to that of the American Indians. Zionism, a state within the Ottoman state; threatens the very existence of the Arabs in Palestine'.³⁷

In mid-April Ahmad al-'Aref, a former member of Parliament, told the editor of *al-Iqdam* that 'The sole topic of conversation among Palestinians at present... is the Zionist issue; all are frightened and scared of it'.

On 11 April, *Falastin* had to publish a supplement, 'owing to the great deal of material on the Zionist Movement'. That issue carried an important article on the economic boycotts and pressures applied by the Anglo-Palestine Bank against merchants and businessmen who had signed a telegram of protest against Zionism. The article named the merchants in question, and how they had to withdraw their signatures, and even to deny that they had signed the telegram in the first place, before the boycott of the Bank was lifted. Only one merchant refused to withdraw his signature and continued to suffer from the Bank's boycott. *Falastin*, then, added that economic boycotts were not new but had become strict of late: 'Jews do not buy from Muslims and Christians, there is hardly any trace of native labour in Jewish enterprise'.

On 20 April 1914, the local authorities suspended *Falastin* on orders received from the Ministry of Interior, on the grounds that an article which had appeared on 4 April was deemed guilty of exacerbating relations between the races. Subsequent to its suspension, *Falastin*

issued a circular to its readers and subscribers 'which attacked the Government for regarding the Zionists as a race, whereas the paper contended that they were merely a political group. The paper distinguished between a Jew and a Zionist and blamed Zionism for the prevailing tensions:

Ten years ago the Jews were living as Ottoman brothers loved by all the Ottoman races. Living in the same quarters, their children going to the same schools. The Zionists put an end to all that and prevented any intermingling with the indigenous population. They boycotted the Arabic language and the Arab merchants, and declared their intention of taking over the country from its inhabitants.³⁸

The circular quoted Dr Urbach of the Zionist Movement as saying in Haifa that Zionism should rise against the Arabs, divide them and evict them; thus serving Ottoman interests.

Furthermore, *Falastin* warned the authorities that Zionism was no longer a ghost but a tangible menace. The central government could suppress *Falastin*, but there were other patriotic papers to 'carry the torch', and there was the youth of Palestine, 'boiling with anxiety over the threatened future'.

The British Vice-Consul in Jaffa as well as the Consul in Jerusalem testified that the circular 'faithfully mirrors the growing resentment among the Arabs against the Jewish invasion'.³⁹

The anti-Zionist campaign in the press continued unabated until the eve of the First World War in August 1914. However, the outbreak of the War did not stop the Arabs from contemplating action against the Zionists. According to Pearlman, 'Papers seized by the Turks in 1915 outline a plan for getting rid of Zionism; the colonies were to be razed by fire, and the Jews driven out. The Zionists it was argued were the worst enemies of the Arabs, that was why the Turks were so ready to assist them'.⁴⁰

The Palestinians came to view the Zionists and the ruling Turkish nationalists as allies against Arab regeneration. It was not surprising that the Palestinians started contemplating violent means to overthrow Turkish hegemony on the eve of World War I as the only effective method of ridding themselves of both hostile forces. The two secret revolutionary organisations *al-Ahd* and *al-Fatat* which were active in promoting the Arab Revolt against the Turks during the war comprised many Palestinian Army Officers. Although the Arabs fought on the side