

Moslems and Christians. Is it for the language? Then it is fairly well known that the language of this country is pure Arab.⁶⁴

The Zionist claim to Palestine, the Committee argued, 'suggests the impracticable necessity of drawing up quite a new map of the world'. In any case the Palestinian Arabs

can never support to be subjugated, on the contrary try to hold fast in our National right up to death.

We, Arabs, are not hostile to the others, and never entertain the least idea to expel other elements from our country wherein we cannot agree to see that our guests the Jews are going to frustrate us from political rights as we are unwilling to consider as native the people who come from outside our country.

'We refuse to see millions of Jews coming into Palestine, for they will engross and monopolise all the product of Palestine, as it should "not be forgotten to state the Jew likes only the Jew, help the Jew and nobody else.

Undoubtedly, such deeds will be the cause of successive revolutions which will ruin the country and be the misfortune of the inhabitants.

... Then the Jews be informed, that Palestine belongs to us, and will never part with it; they must also know that we are born in Palestine wherein we hope to die and be buried in its holy grounds.

The memorandum was conciliatory towards Britain and uncompromising towards the Zionists in conformity with the general policy adopted by the Arab political notability in Palestine. However, it was not unlikely that the members of the Jaffa Muslim-Christian Committee were more friendly to the British than other Committees, in view of their trading and citrus interests which depended to a great extent on the goodwill and policies of the Government. Another factor in the (Jaffa) Committee's attitude towards the British Government may be attributed to the relatively friendly disposition of Colonel Hubbard, the Military Governor, who was in favour of a more even-handed British policy in Palestine.⁶⁵

Following a visit to Jerusalem, Sykes observed that there were two Arab complaints:

(I) The Zionists are aggressive, demonstrative and provocative, and threaten them with a Jewish Government. (II) The British Home

Government is acting in such a way that the Palestinian Arabs will sooner or later become subject to Jewish rule.⁶⁶

However, Sykes detected

a feeling among the Arabs that the declaration really does not amount to much and that the Arabs have only to agitate in order to get it shelved or rendered nugatory.

Nevertheless, Sykes genuinely feared 'that non-Jews may think best demonstration is violent outbreak'.

Contemplated violence was not the only problem which faced British officials in Palestine. To the embarrassment of the British authorities the Palestinians raised the issue of the unity of Syria and Palestine. During the second half of November, eighteen copies of the Anglo-French Declaration of 7 November were distributed. On the following day a deputation of Muslims and Christians called on Storrs. After offering to the Allies their sincere thanks for the Declaration, they asked Storrs formally:

(a) Whether Palestine formed or did not form part of Syria.

(b) Whether, if so, Palestine came under the category of those inhabitants of the liberated countries who were invited to choose their own futures; and

(c) If, not, why the notices had been sent to them at all.⁶⁷

In his report of the incident, Storrs also spoke about the solidarity between the Muslim and Christian Arabs and their united stand regarding 'their acceptance of the Anglo-French Declaration and their desire for a Sherifian Government'.⁶⁸ Days later Storrs reported that, in addition to the formation of a Christian-Muslim Arab Committee in Jerusalem,

daily meetings were reported to me at the Mukataf al-Drus School, the name of which has now been changed to the Arab Club. Two main decisions were taken at these meetings (1) that a signed petition should be sent to the French Commissariat, begging that Palestine might be formally included in Syria, and (2) that on Friday last the 22nd the name of the Sherif should be pronounced as Caliph.⁶⁹