

by appealing to the fanaticism of the villagers and as they would certainly be supported by Arabs outside Palestine.<sup>75</sup>

It was under the influence of the 'young bloods' that the Conference passed some strong-worded resolutions. The delegations held that the resolutions expressed the wishes and demands of the people of 'Southern Syria known as Palestine'. They communicated these resolutions to the Peace Conference 'being convinced that it will admit our rights, comply with our demands and grant our requests'. The Palestinians' wishes and demands submitted to the Peace Conference opened by a reference to 'the fact that the Declaration of President Wilson is considered to be one of the fundamental principles on which the Peace Conference is based for the freedom of nations liberated from the Turkish yoke, the cancellation of all secret treaties concluded during the war and the promise to nations to choose the kind of government they desire for themselves'.<sup>76</sup>

The decisions are worth quoting in full:<sup>77</sup>

1. We consider Palestine as part of Arab Syria, as it has never been separated from it at any time. We are connected with it by national, religious, linguistic, natural, economic and geographical bonds.

2. The Declaration made by M. Pichon, Minister for Foreign Affairs for France, that France had rights in our country based on the desires and aspirations of the inhabitants has no foundation and we reject all the declarations made in his speech of 29th December, 1918, as our wishes and aspirations are only in Arab unity and complete independence.

3. In view of the above we desire that one district Southern Syria or Palestine should not be separated from the Independent Arab Syrian Government and to be free from all foreign influence and protection.

4. In accordance with the rule laid down by President Wilson and approved by most of the Great Powers we consider that every promise or treaty concluded in respect of our country and its future as null and void and reject the same.

5. The Government of the country will apply for help to its friend Great Britain in case of need for the improvement and development of the country provided that this will not affect its independence and Arab unity in any way and will keep good relations with the Allied Powers.<sup>78</sup>

The Palestine Conference also decided to send a delegation to Damascus 'to inform Arab patriots there of the decision to call Palestine Southern Syria and unite it with Northern Syria'.<sup>79</sup> Another delegation of three was named 'as possible representatives to go to Paris'.<sup>80</sup> The decisions of the Conference were presented in writing to the British, French, Italian and Spanish representatives in Jerusalem. It was apparent that the young elements, with the help of Palestinian pressure from outside, prevailed on the Conference. Before adjourning, the Conference agreed to meet again at Nablus three months hence, but failed to elect an executive Committee to the Conference.

Camp's observations and remarks were upheld by a paper written by Weizmann based on reports supplied by a nascent Zionist intelligence department. The paper, which was forwarded by Sykes to the F.O., added new dimensions to the possibilities of Arab action against Zionism:

The pro-Arabic and the absolute annexation of Palestine to the Cherif is the opinion of the greatest intellectual and agitating part of the youth. . .

The moderate class of opinion belongs to the notability of the elder age are for a local autonomy. They are much more materialistic than idealist. Though being hostile to the Jews they do not show their hostility and will not oppose themselves to a political entente with the Jew. Youth fighting very much against them.<sup>81</sup>

In a 'Postscriptum to the note concerning the Arab question', dated 8 January 1919, Weizmann disclosed that the Palestinian moderates, aged men, Muslims and Christians belonging to the rich and influential families of Palestine, especially of Jerusalem, had organised themselves under the name of 'Moslem and Christian Association'. This Association advocated

the necessity of sending delegates to Europe, who will reclaim 'Palestine for the Palestinians'. They said that it was impossible for the Christians as well as for the Jews to accept the rule of the Cheriff over Palestine as asked by the youth.<sup>82</sup>

#### **Britain's Weak Point**

As Arab agitation against Zionism mounted,<sup>83</sup> the relations between the Palestinian Arabs and the British Administration became increasingly precarious. The failure of the British Government to respond to the