

and gendarmes and that is very good for our future. We must all know the martyrs of the Fatherland and our honour.<sup>113</sup>

Another member reported that 'all the fellaheens and beduins are waiting for the first signals and are ready for everything'.

The Zionist informer did not fail to report the secretive manner of the *el-Feda'iyyeh* 'who decided to meet once or twice a week without mentioning the next meeting only a few hours before the meeting time'.

Another report covered a meeting at the *Muntada el-'Adabi* where Issaf Nashashibi, the well-known literary figure, stated that money was very much needed, and it was not a shame to collect the money either by representation or by lottery. He also advocated 'continuous troubles' with the Jews as a means of discouraging immigration.<sup>114</sup>

Mahmoud 'Aziz el-Khalidi, who belonged to many secret societies, advocated assassinating some Jewish leaders in Jaffa and Haifa as a means of intimidating potential Jewish immigrants. Furthermore, his speech revealed the existence of religious overtones and considerable agitation against the British:

The youth of this country are not afraid of anybody even the autocratic Government. They want to begin already and they will all receive death gladly. Most of them ask me always when we are going to rise against the unbelievers and know our strength and get rid of them once and for all.<sup>115</sup>

In the light of these activities and points of view, General H.D. Watson's warning shortly after taking over the Administration of OETA South, was both realistic and timely:

The antagonism to Zionism of the majority of the population is deep-rooted — it is fast leading to hatred of the British — and will result, if the Zionist programme is forced upon them, in an outbreak of a very serious character necessitating the employment of a much larger number of troops than at present located in the territory.<sup>116</sup>

From the available intelligence reports, British and Zionist, it was apparent that the peasants were more prone to action and to revolt entailing self-sacrifice than other groups of society. This was, in some instances, attributed to religious fanaticism. In addition to this relevant element, there were economic reasons for peasant resentment of Zionist

schemes and ambitions: the boycott of Arab labour in Jewish colonies and Jewish enterprise, the prospect of being uprooted as the Zionists acquired more lands, and finally Zionist opposition to the Agricultural Loans Scheme.<sup>117</sup>

According to the report of the Court of Inquiry which investigated the circumstances that led to the disturbances of April 1920:

The incident of the veto on the Agricultural Loans, however, had a far greater effect in inflaming the growing irritation of the population against the Zionists. . . The people at once came to the conclusion that the Zionists had interfered in order that they should be left in great straits and should ultimately have to sell their lands to the Zionists at any price.<sup>118</sup>

During September British Naval Intelligence reported that anti-Zionist feeling was becoming increasingly bitter and that 'a plot has been discovered by us by which it was proposed to assassinate Dr Weizmann on his arrival'.<sup>119</sup>

On announcing the separation of Palestine from Syria towards the end of September vehement protests were voiced in Jerusalem's *Suriyya al-Janubiyya* (Southern Syria), which was owned and edited by 'Aref al-'Aref, and in the Damascus press. The announcement inspired an article by 'Izzat Darwaza in *al-Urdun* (The Jordan), published in Damascus, appropriately entitled 'Now is the Time to Act':

It is not for the representatives of English, French and Zionist affairs to do as they please with a country which has been liberated by the blood of its children, who are ready to shed more blood if necessary to attain their ends.<sup>120</sup>

Another Naval Intelligence report noted that by November 1919 the whole anti-Zionist movement in Palestine had taken a very anti-British turn. Four weeks later Naval Intelligence reported that anti-Zionist propaganda was spreading to small villages where the fellaheen

are interested listeners when local and Damascus papers are read out to them. . . The possibility of active opposition to the Jews is being discussed. There are indications that a definite demonstration against the Zionists will be attempted, and an undoubted air of expectancy exists.<sup>121</sup>