

Government and strengthened unity between Christians and Muslims not only in Haifa but in other districts as well. In Beisan demonstrators protested against Zionism and Jewish immigration during Samuel's visit to the town. In Samaria the Governor reported 'increasing influence of anti-Zionist leaders over the peasantry'.⁴⁴

Hajj Amin as Mufti

The report also made reference to an important and controversial issue:

In Jerusalem the chief topic of interest has been the election of the New Mufti; opinion has been divided as to who should succeed Kamel Eff al Hussein, members of whose family (one of the most influential and respected in Palestine) have held this office for several generations. Learned opinion, represented by the Law Courts, has not favoured the popular candidate al Hajj Amin al Hussein, brother of the late Mufti and the elections that were held returned to the latter at the bottom of the poll causing indignation to the Hussein family (to which somewhat clamorous expression has been given) to a very large section of the inhabitants of all the districts. The Government, the Jews and the Mayor of Jerusalem were all suspected of having influenced the election. Technical flaws in the constitution of the electorate have delayed the settlement of this question.⁴⁵

Settled or not, Hajj Amin soon assumed the role of the Mufti, and it was he who invited Samuel to a luncheon on the occasion of the celebration of the carrying of the standard to Nebi Musa on 25 April. Samuel's acceptance of the invitation implied Government's recognition of Hajj Amin as Mufti, while the latter's friendliness and courtesy to Samuel on that occasion proved that he was willing to come to terms with the Government. It soon became clear that the election was to be disregarded and Hajj Amin allowed to become Mufti. Thus Samuel avoided alienating the Husseins in a balancing act in accordance with recognisable traditional imperial policy.

The question of the Muftiship was an important one in view of the fact that the Mufti of Jerusalem was regarded by the Administration as the head of the Muslim community in Palestine. Furthermore, Hajj Amin was elected as *Ra'is al-'Ulama'* and President of the Supreme Muslim Council which provided him with a solid power-base through the effective control over the management of religious endowments *awqaf* and the expenditure of income therefrom, the appointment and

dismissal of all *shari'a* (Islamic) Courts and *waqf* officials, as well as the nomination of *qadis* (Judges).

The Administration's efforts to conciliate Arab public opinion in Palestine could not possibly do away with the two grounds on which Arab opposition stood, namely, the political and the constitutional grounds. On the political level the Administration was not in a position to nullify the Balfour Declaration and the JNH policy. On the constitutional side the Palestine Administration could do nothing to hasten the final settlement of the Mandate at the Peace Conference, nor could it change its autocratic and bureaucratic character to a representative and popular one. For whereas the purpose of other mandates was preparing the natives for self-government, the Palestine Administration was committed to a policy of 'immobilism' since self-government for the Arab majority in Palestine was inconsistent with the JNH policy.

Jaffa's Revolt

Shortly after the collision between the Haifa demonstrators and the police, an Arab was found dead in the neighbourhood of a camp of Jewish immigrants, and the situation became exceedingly explosive. The expected outburst eventually took place in Jaffa during the first two weeks of May. This was not surprising in view of unemployment and widespread resentment against Zionist immigration and the quality of the immigrants who abounded in the Arab port.⁴⁶

On the evening of 30 April, Communist pamphlets and leaflets in Hebrew, Yiddish and Arabic were distributed calling for a May Day cessation of work, a proletarian rising against the British and the establishment of a Soviet Palestine.⁴⁷

On the morning of 1 May an authorised Zionist socialist (Poale Zion) demonstration clashed with an unauthorised demonstration by some fifty Communists carrying a red flag in Tel-Aviv, the Jewish quarter of Jaffa. The Communists (Bolsheviks) were eventually forced out of Tel-Aviv into the mixed Muslim and Jewish quarter of Menshiah. When the police attempted to disperse the Bolsheviks, the Muslims became involved and a general disturbance occurred, which soon spread to the other parts of the town. Wild rumours of Jewish attacks enraged the Arabs.

According to Brunton, 'It is stated that the Jews first began by firing on the Arab passers-by' and that the Arabs attacked a house for the reception of Jewish immigrants. On this occasion the Muslims and Christians demonstrated their solidarity and unity in the fight against Zionism.⁴⁸