

party emerged at this point, the Peasants' Party, which was regarded in Arab nationalist circles as a Zionist creation, a result of Kalvarisky's efforts in particular. When the leaders of the National Party left the Palace where King Hussein had received them 'some youths and small boys shouted at them, "down with the traitors, down with the Zionists", and began to stone them'.<sup>8</sup>

The political platform of the nationalist movement was increasingly stressing the demand for a national government: 'This idea is given priority even to the abolition of the Balfour Declaration. Cabinets have been discussed and ministerial candidates nominated'.<sup>9</sup>

The inability of the traditional leadership to articulate the demands of the Palestinians in any effective manner gave rise to criticism of 'the obsolete methods and interested motives of the old school'.<sup>10</sup> The old school, however, were determined not to lose power. The Husseins took precautionary measures to preserve their hegemony over the two most important Muslim positions in Palestine, namely, the Muftiship and the Presidency of the Supreme Muslim Council, in the event of protests being raised against the union of the two posts in the person of Hajj Amin.

Despite the continued supremacy of the traditional leadership, the educated 'young bloods' were reported to be gaining ground. In a meeting of the Executive Committee, held with a view to issuing a summons for a fresh Arab Congress, the political inactivity of the Committee was severely criticised:

The dominating note of the debates appears to have been dissatisfaction with the 'old' party, whose maintenance of family interests and general incapacity were held up to ridicule by the 'intellectuals'. These in their turn were characterised by Ismail Bey al-Husseini as Bolsheviks but, nevertheless, succeeded in obtaining the lead.

The proposed Congress failed to materialise despite the efforts of the visiting Tunisian leader, 'Abdul-Aziz al-Tha' alibi to promote unity among the ranks of the Palestinian political leadership. Family dissensions and personal interests predominated:

In both Jerusalem and Jaffa family jealousy is aiding political opposition in starting a campaign against the respective Municipalities for their chief support of Government policy.<sup>12</sup>

The disputes between the parties persisted leading to the indefinite

postponement of the Arab Congress. The Arab Executive's attempt to meet Jamal Hussein's condition for resuming office — i.e. adequate funds — was not a total success. The (Agricultural) Peasants' Party, though inconsequential, was reported to be negotiating for Zionist support and the National Party was reported 'busy with village propaganda'.<sup>13</sup>

#### A Bone of Contention

Jamal Hussein's activities, and the efforts of the Supreme Muslim Council failed to put an end to internal divisions or to enhance the standing of the Arab Executive. What brought a flicker of nationalist activity was a proposed transfer of large areas of land, including villages, from the Sursuq family (absentee Lebanese landlords) to Jewish groups, and the backing of the activities of the Peasants' Party. As a reaction to the latter's efforts a Muslim-Christian Society branch was established at Beisan. The Acting District Governor of Haifa deplored the fact

that Colonel Kitcher and Mr. Kalvarisky should imagine that the future of the policy lies in the hands of those who attempt to create a 'favourable attitude of mind' through the agency of promises of financial help.<sup>14</sup>

Land sales continued to be the main political issue and it was expressly suggested that the proposed Congress should devote all its attention to the formation of a company for buying Arab lands, which would otherwise be sold to the Jews. The sale of five villages, during September 1924, roused public feeling and 'every effort, is being made to prevent it becoming effective'.<sup>15</sup>

The departure of the High Commissioner for Geneva spurred the Arab Executive into submitting a comprehensive memorandum to the League of Nations attacking the policy of Government. The final sentence of the long memorandum summed up the Arab demand in the following words:

The establishment in Palestine of a National Constitutional Government in which the two Communities, Arab and Jewish, will be represented in proportion to their number as they existed before the application of the Zionist Policy.<sup>16</sup>

A proposal to send a delegation to Geneva fell to the ground for lack of funds. A press campaign, however, urging reconciliation between