

reimposed, and the Arabic press in protest declined to publish. The general strike was maintained until 2 November, when the Arab Executive called off the strike.

A Genuine National Feeling

Wauchope did not hesitate to inform Cunliffe-Lister that the disturbances of October 1933 were 'anti-British and anti-Government in character. . . No Jews were molested'.⁶⁸ The High Commissioner attributed the immediate cause of the rioting to an overpowering desire to protest against Jewish immigration:

It would be a mistake however to imagine that sole cause of riot was Jewish National Home Immigration. A genuine national feeling is growing constantly more powerful in Palestine and more bitter against British Government and moreover reflected in other parts of Arab world.⁶⁹

The reaction of the neighbouring Arab countries to the 1933 demonstrations was strikingly strong. Palestine was increasingly becoming the focal point of Arab nationalist agitation and concern.⁷⁰

Following the disturbances, persistent Palestinian Arab allegations of police brutality compelled Wauchope to appoint a Commission of Enquiry. The Munson-Trusted Commission of Enquiry confined themselves to the narration of the facts and the developments that took place during the week of disturbances in the major towns of Palestine. According to their report one policeman and twenty-six Arab citizens were killed while 56 policemen and 187 Arabs were injured.⁷¹

The events of 1933 demonstrated a growing purposefulness among the Arabs of Palestine. An unprecedented week of strikes and clashes with Government forces throughout Palestine revealed the depth of Arab feelings against the JNH policy. Furthermore, the disturbances revealed that the Arabs were disposed towards the use of violence⁷² to deflect the Mandatory from its policy, and that the real aim of the Palestinians was national independence.

Britain's Imperial Interests

The British Government, too, viewed the deteriorating situation with concern. British Imperial interests in Palestine were no longer confined to the defence of the Suez Canal. The Mosul-Haifa pipeline, the Haifa harbour and the Imperial Airways air route to India via Gaza, rendered Palestine an essential link in the Imperial strategy and the Empire's

system of communication.⁷³

However, rebelliousness of the Arabs tended to strengthen the bonds of alliance and cooperation between the Zionists and the British. The Government were inclined to react favourably to the Zionists' demands 'to postpone the question of a Legislative Council indefinitely'.⁷⁴ In return Ben Gurion, the influential Zionist leader, assured Wauchope that

. . . the Jews wanted Palestine to become a fraction of the British Empire; there alone safety lay.⁷⁵

Explosive as the situation was, Wauchope was not as alarmed as might have been expected for three main reasons:

First, because their character was purely political; second because the fellaheen did not join in the riots; and third, because the leaders showed no powers of organization.⁷⁶

Wauchope rightly assessed that Hajj Amin was the only Palestinian force capable of altering the situation. This safety valve was under control owing

To the agreement government made last year with the Supreme Moslem Council and to my own (at present) most happy relations with the Mufti and other members of the Supreme Moslem Council.⁷⁷

The agreement in question was a provisional one, whereby the Government conceded to the Supreme Muslim Council complete control over *waqf* funds, as a reward for the Mufti in exercising 'his great authority over the *fellahin* to stop them heeding the extremists'.⁷⁸ When Hajj Amin succeeded in restraining Arab demonstrations against British policies in mid-January 1934, the grateful Colonial Secretary approved a permanent agreement with the Mufti over the control of *waqf* finances.⁷⁹

It was a remarkable feat on Hajj Amin's part to achieve ascendancy within the national movement in Palestine while maintaining friendly relations with the High Commissioner and a conciliatory attitude towards the British at a time when the contradiction between the two forces was becoming increasingly sharp. This could only be explained in the light of the situation obtaining inside the Arab camp at that period.