

trade unions--the Palestine Arab Workers' Society (under social-democratic leadership) and the Federation of Arab Trade Unions (under communist leadership)--remained free from the control of the Husseini and Nashashibi parties. In 1948 it is generally acknowledged that Sami Taha, general secretary of PAWS, was assassinated on orders of Haj Amin al-Husseini because of his active opposition to the Mufti's leadership.

Case Three is the Istiqlal (independence) Party. Led by Awni Abdul Hadi, himself a member of one of the largest landowning families in Palestine, al-Istiqlal was founded in 1932 and became the most militant of the nationalist parties. The social composition of al-Istiqlal's membership reflected a high concentration of intellectuals and members of the nascent bourgeois class. Tuma describes it as "the nearest party (in Palestine) which expressed the ambitions of the Arab nationalist movement led by the bourgeoisie, and reflecting, to some extent, mass sentiments" (Tuma, 1973:197). The significance of the Istiqlal lies, however, in its conscious attempts to create an alternative political movement to the factional leadership of Jerusalem. In order to do this it was willing to cooperate even with the communists (see above, p. ), but its real asset was the important contacts its leader, Awni Abdul Hadi, had established with King Faisal of Iraq and the Saudi ruling dynasty, and his ability to use these contacts as a leverage in the Arab Higher Committee (Lesch, 1973:23).

Naji Allush, who refers to al-Istiqlal as a party composed of "semi-bourgeois, semi-feudal elements" concludes that the vacillations of the party from its class basis (presumably the bourgeoisie) to its links with the mass movement brought its downfall. "By raising slogans such as 'the English are the roots of the disease', 'resistance until victory', and calling for total boycott and abstaining from payment of direct taxes, at a time when the national leadership was following the path of compromise and concessions, (al-Istiqlal)