

— peasants, beduins and the uneducated — and their discovery of their power to resist and obstruct the Government was an important new factor to consider. Furthermore, the Arabs possessed another weapon against the Government, namely, that of passive resistance. Should the British Government snub the Delegation, Samuel warned that the turbaned class — the Muslim religious leaders, who had hitherto been 'mere spectators' — would step in to take the place of the politicians in leading agitation and rebellion against the Government's policy.

The conclusion is that a serious attempt must be made to arrive at an understanding with the opponents to the Zionist policy, even at the cost of considerable sacrifices. The only alternative is a policy of coercion, which is wrong in principle and likely to prove unsuccessful in practice.⁷¹

An understanding with the Delegation was not only urgent and necessary, Samuel added, but was also possible. Speaking of the members of the Delegation, he reassured the Colonial Secretary, 'I am informed that their present attitude is by no means uncompromising'.⁷²

Despite the upholding of Martial Law in the district of Jaffa and the arming of the Jewish Colonies, the resumption of immigration produced some effervescence 'and the boatmen at the Port (of Jaffa) have given much trouble in connection with the landing of Jewish travellers'.⁷³ Nonetheless, Samuel expected the country to remain quiet so long as the Delegation was in England.

Meantime certain sections are proceeding with the formation of a more moderate party which, while not concealing its dislike of the Zionist Policy, emphasises rather the need for domestic reform, particularly, in the interests of the population of the villages.⁷⁴

The idea of co-operating with a Government committed to a JNH policy was not altogether new among a section of the political notability. In May 1921, the Mayors of Jerusalem, Tulkarem and Jaffa, the Muftis of Acre and Safad and the *Qadi* of Jerusalem received British decorations 'for services rendered in Palestine'. Furthermore, the battle over the Muftiship renewed and intensified old family feuds, particularly between the Nashashibis and the Husseinis. Zionist efforts and money to promote discord and disunity among the Palestinian political leaders constituted a contributing factor to the idea of a 'moderate party'. In a letter to the Zionist Executive, Eder had the

following to report;

Arabs. I am still in negotiation with Arabs. There are various moves on. If I had money something might still be done. . . There is just a possibility of being able to send a second delegation in opposition to the first.⁷⁵

Neither a moderate party nor a second delegation were necessary at that stage, from the British point of view. The delegates were showing signs of eagerness to come to an agreement with the Government and hinted that they may even agree to an implicit acceptance of the Balfour Declaration in principle.⁷⁶

The Delegation's moderation, however, did not represent the political mood of the population. A confidential Government report assessing the political atmosphere in July 1921 spoke at length about waning Government prestige, public insecurity and the explosiveness of the whole situation:

There is a consensus of opinion that a rising cannot be postponed much beyond the return of the Delegation from Europe should they come back empty handed.⁷⁷

The report concluded that 'nothing short of a modification of the Jewish policy and the establishment of some form of proportional representation will ease the situation'.

After a short visit to Cairo, the Delegation went to Rome where they were received in audience by the Pope who expressed sympathy with their cause. They then proceeded to London where they found out that Parliament was not in session. Three members of the Delegation returned to Geneva to put the Palestine Arab case before the League of Nations and protest against the Zionists clauses in the draft Mandate. These delegates also participated in a coordinated general Arab propaganda effort in Geneva.⁷⁸ On their return to England they launched a general propaganda campaign and engaged 'the services of an Advertising and Press Agency'.⁷⁹

One day before Churchill received the first memorandum from the Arab Delegation, he raised the Palestine Question before the Cabinet:

The situation in Palestine causes me perplexity and anxiety. The whole country is in a ferment. The Zionist policy is profoundly unpopular with all except the Zionists. Both Arabs and Jews are