

2. Until further development of Jewish lands and of irrigation had taken place and the Arabs had adopted better methods of cultivation, 'there is no room for a single additional settler if the standard of life of the *fellaheen* is to remain at its present level.' On State lands, similarly, there was no room, pending development, for Jewish settlers.

Furthermore, Simpson expressed his conviction that Arab unemployment was serious and widespread and that it was wrong to admit Jewish immigrants to fill vacancies in Palestine when unemployed Arabs were capable of filling the vacancy.

Passfield's White Paper

While upholding the theory of 'Dual Obligation' under the Mandate, and the principle of 'Economic Absorptive Capacity' as a regulative guide to the number of Jewish immigrants allowed into the country, Passfield's White Paper adopted, by and large, Simpson's estimates and promised to implement his recommendations. Furthermore it declared that the time had come to establish a Legislative Council on the lines indicated in the Churchill White Paper.

The Zionist outcry against the Simpson Report and the 1930 White Paper was vehement and overpowering. Weizmann protested that the White Paper was inconsistent with the terms of the Mandate and informed Passfield that he had resigned his joint office of President of the World Zionist Organisation and the Jewish Agency. The Zionists staged demonstrations in many Western countries and their attitude was openly supported by leading British politicians. The ensuing 'public ventilation of the controversy was an impressive demonstration of the Political power the Zionists could mobilise in England'.¹⁸

Zionist agitation over this issue did not subside until it was announced in November that the Jewish Agency had been invited to confer with HMG on the White Paper, as a prelude to swinging back to a pro-Zionist British policy in Palestine.

While not completely satisfied with the White Paper, the Palestinian leaders were, nevertheless, encouraged by the implication of what seemed to be a fresh attitude on immigration and land settlement. They were hopeful that further favourable changes would be forthcoming.

Thus the Arab Executive announced on the eve of the Balfour Declaration's anniversary that for the first time there would be no strike proclaimed.¹⁹ Significantly, the Students' Higher Committee called for a strike on that occasion.²⁰

Another indication of the conciliatory outlook of the Palestinian notability was Jamal Haseini's 'attitude of great reasonableness' during

his conversations with the officials of the Colonial Office in December.²¹ In the course of these conversations, Jamal Hussein, who was in London as a personal representative of the Mufti, agreed to a Round Table Conference provided the Jewish representation was confined to Palestine Jews to the exclusion of Weizmann and other non-Palestinian Zionists. Any negotiations with Weizmann, Hussein argued, would involve an 'acceptance of Zionism', which the Palestinians were not prepared to accept under any circumstances.

On receiving news of the official talks between the Government and the Zionists over the 'White Paper', the Arab Executive hastened to give public expression to their apprehensions and misgivings at the prospect of a revision of the White Paper in favour of the Zionists. Even before the news of the talks broke out, the Arabs were alarmed by the Government's grant of 1,500 immigration certificates. These ominous signs did not deter Jamal Hussein, on his return to Palestine, from 'going round the country speaking warmly of the courtesy and consideration with which he was treated by the Officials of the Colonial Office, who, he states, are sympathetic to the Arab case'.²²

The 'Black Letter'

Early in January 1931, Passfield informed Chancellor that in view of the necessity of finding a 'Modus co-operandi' with the Jewish Organisation in the wake of the outcry against the White Paper, the Government

seem to have no alternative to writing and publishing, or allowing to be published, a letter to Dr. Weizmann, defining our policy in Palestine in terms more precise and more acceptable to the Jews than those of the White Paper of which it is to be the authoritative interpretation on the matters with which it deals.²³

Shortly before the publication of MacDonald's letter to Weizmann, Passfield anticipated that the intended letter may have the effect of increasing Chancellor's difficulties with the Arabs and that the result was unavoidable 'for political and international reasons'²⁴ arising from Zionist pressure.

In his letter to Weizmann, MacDonald asserted that HMG intended to stand by the Mandate, which they viewed as an obligation to World Jewry and not only to the Jews of Palestine, to uphold the JNH policy by further land settlement and immigration by Jews and to condone the Zionist policy of insisting on Jewish labour for work on Jewish