

developments in the Palestine situation:

The Secretary of State for the Colonies observed that the Government were faced with a most serious situation both in Palestine and in the Near East and at home. As a result of the events of the last few days, the whole Jewish world was in a turmoil. Mr Lloyd George and others were showing increased anxiety, and Mr Attlee wished Parliament to be specially summoned.<sup>49</sup>

At the end of their meeting the Cabinet resolved that 'intensive measures, designed to crush Arab resistance, should be taken, and that for this purpose the troops in Palestine should be reinforced by a complete division sent from home, and that at an appropriate moment martial law should be applied either to the whole of Palestine or to selected parts thereof'.

Five days after the Cabinet's decision to crush the rebellion the Colonial Office issued a rigorous statement regarding the 'direct challenge to the authority of the British government in Palestine'. The British Government, the Colonial Office asserted, had made several attempts at reasonable conciliation to no avail. Their patience was now exhausted and the state of disorder must be brought to an end without delay. An additional division of troops was being sent to Palestine and Lieutenant-General J.G. Dill would assume the supreme military command.

Three days after this uncompromising announcement Wauchope saw Hajj Amin, Ragheb Nashashibi and 'Awni 'Abdul Hadi individually, before the Higher Committee met to discuss the latest British move. According to Wauchope the Arab leaders were ready to urge cessation of acts of disorder and to call off without any precedent condition if so requested by Arab Kings.<sup>50</sup>

On the following day, the Higher Committee published a manifesto which referred to the Arabs' loss of confidence in the usefulness of commissions of enquiry and refuted the Government's claim that the Arab Kings and statesmen had offered their mediation as a result of a request to do so by the Palestinian leaders. Significantly, the manifesto added that the Arabs' reverence for their Kings was well known and it was unthinkable for the Palestinians not to act in harmony with this particular tradition. The mediation of the Arab Kings, the manifesto asserted, was the best solution to the problem.<sup>51</sup> Kawukji issued a manifesto the same effect, despite the fact that large numbers of the population are perfectly ready to continue the fighting, more especially

as they receive assistance in men and arms from over the border'.<sup>52</sup>

These conciliatory declarations notwithstanding, the British reinforcements began to arrive in Palestine on 22 September, boosting the number of British troops in the country to over 20,000 and extensive operations were immediately undertaken to crush the rebels. The last week of September and the first ten days of October witnessed the sharpest battles, in the 1936 rebellion, between the British troops and the Arab rebels.

Towards the end of September a delegation from the Higher Committee set off to confer with Ibn Sa'ud and on 29 September 'Awni 'Abdul Hadi went to Trans-Jordan to interview 'Abdullah. As a result of these contacts and in accordance with prior consultations with the British Government Ibn Sa'ud, King Ghazi of Iraq and 'Abdullah despatched, on 10 October, an identically worded appeal to call off the strike and discontinue the rebellion and 'rely on the good intentions of our friend Great Britain, who has declared that she will do justice'.<sup>53</sup>

#### The End of the First Phase

On the following day the Higher Committee published the appeals of the Arab rulers and announced that after obtaining the approval of the National Committees they had decided to call upon the noble Arab nation in Palestine to resort to quietness and to put an end to the Strike and 'disorders'.

The strike and the rebellion were effectively and immediately called off, and the bands were permitted to disband and the rebels from the neighbouring Arab states were eventually allowed to cross the border. The general atmosphere began to cool down.

As a result of the rebellion sixteen Police and twenty-two military had been killed and 104 Police and 148 military wounded,<sup>54</sup> 80 Jews had been killed and about 308 wounded. According to official reports there were 145 Arabs killed and 804 wounded, but these figures were based on verified deaths and treatment in hospitals. The Peel Commission was inclined to believe that 1,000 Arabs were killed mostly in fighting.<sup>55</sup> The Jewish Agency reported 80,000 citrus trees, 62,000 other fruit trees, 64,000 forest trees and 16,500 *dunums* of crops belonging to Jews or Jewish bodies had been destroyed by the Arabs.

Britain's inability or unwillingness to suspend immigration reinforced the Arabs' belief that Britain was irrevocably committed to a pro-Zionist policy in Palestine which could not be changed unless and until independence was achieved.

The military punitive measures, village searches, wholesale arrests,