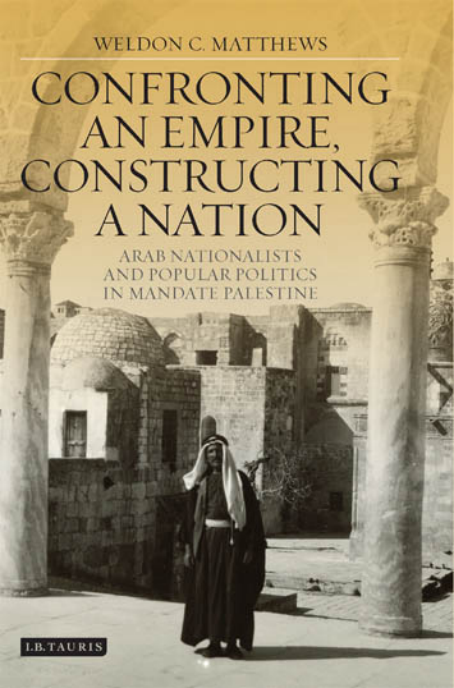


WELDON C. MATTHEWS

CONFRONTING AN EMPIRE, CONSTRUCTING A NATION

ARAB NATIONALISTS
AND POPULAR POLITICS
IN MANDATE PALESTINE

LB.TAURIS



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*Arab Nationalists and Popular
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Weldon C. Matthews

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AUB	American University of Beirut
AWS	Arab Workers Society
CID	Criminal Investigation Division
CO	Colonial Office
CUP	Committee of Union and Progress
CZA	Central Zionist Archives
FO	Foreign Office
HMSO	His Majesty's Stationery Office
ISA	Israel State Archives
JNF	Jewish National Fund
PAWS	Palestine Arab Workers Society
PLDC	Palestine Land Development Company
RG	Record Group
SMC	Supreme Muslim Council
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YMMA	Young Men's Muslim Association

Note on Transliteration

In transliterating Arabic and Hebrew, I omit diacritical markings with the exception of those for the *ʿayn* and *hamza*. Otherwise, I follow the United States Library of Congress system of transliteration for Arabic words and apply the same principles to Hebrew. In cases of Arabic words that have entered English, I prefer to use the transliterated Arabic (for example *shaykh*, not *sheikh* and *amir*, not *emir*.) I follow existing convention – as much as any exists – in the formation of plurals of Arabic words. Thus, I form the plural of *waqf* as *awqaf*, but *shaykh* as *shaykhs*. I use the word ‘Druze’ as both a singular and a plural (namely, not ‘Druzes’). For classification codes of documents in the Israel State Archives, I represent the Hebrew letters *bet*, *mem*, and *pe* with the lower-case Latin letters *b*, *m*, and *p*, respectively.

I also occasionally employ the title ‘effendi’ with the first name of a personality when I mention two or more people of the same family name in close proximity. This was a customary form of address for an educated male during the period under review, and it permits me to avoid either excessively repeating a personality’s full name or referring to him by his first name. The latter alternative seems to me to be overly familiar.

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I benefited greatly from the comments of my colleagues at Whitman College, who read a section of this study that I presented to the history department. The companionship of the faculty and my fellow adjunct professors, John McNay, Pamela Edwards and Jim Barnhardt at Shippensburg University made a year and a half of this long project exceptionally enjoyable. I must also express my appreciation for the encouragement and advice of my colleagues at Oakland University over the last four years. Finally, my debt to my parents and my sister for the support they have always given me is greater than I will ever be able to repay, and I have dedicated this book to them.

Introduction

I have intended for this book to contribute to an explanation of how the Arabism and Arab nationalism of the late Ottoman era were transformed during the interwar period into resources for popular mobilization among Palestinian Arabs. The transformation was not a linear and unbroken process, and it cannot be assumed that in Palestine it was identical to that of other Arab lands. Thus, in this study I examine a crucial period within which Palestinians chose Arab nationalism as the basis for collective political action.

It is specifically Arab nationalism that concerns us here, and it is therefore useful to state what may well be obvious: the expression 'Arab nationalism' has meant different things to different people at the same time and across time. Some observers have equated it with pan-Arabism and set it against territorial nationalisms like Palestinian Arab nationalism.¹ A scholar has also claimed that the territorial and pan-Arab varieties exist as 'parallel nationalisms ... without the one detracting from the force or the incidence of the other, representing two enfolded horizons of polity'.² However, the relationship between pan-Arab nationalism and regional nationalism has never been static. Under some circumstances one has reinforced the other, while in different circumstances they have represented competing conceptions of identity.³ This proposition recognizes the frequently observed fact that identity – collective and individual – is inherently contingent. Concepts of identity, whether expressed through kinship, citizenship, or religious and national identity, are generated, chosen and manipulated in specific historical circumstances. As Dale Eickelman explains, 'These forms do not exist as objects that can be torn from social and cultural contexts by anthropologists for recording and classification into typologies.'⁴

The manner in which elements of collective identity can at various times and for various individuals either compete or mutually reinforce one another, and the conditions under which those elements come to be understood as 'national' are major themes of the present

study. The vehicle I have chosen to pursue these themes is the Arab Istiqlal (Independence) Party. It was at once a Palestinian, pan-Syrian, and pan-Arab political party. It was also the first Arab party in Palestine to attempt mass, public organization. Its appearance in 1932 thus constituted a watershed both in the expression of political identity by Palestinian Arabs and in the associational life of their society. No less significantly, the party's activities marked a critical weakening of the variety of politics commonly referred to as 'the politics of notables' – one characterized by the secretive dealings of an Arab elite that viewed itself as a mediating leadership standing between the state and its subjects.⁵ The Istiqlal Party cultivated the corps of activists who employed public opinion to push the Palestinian Arab notable leadership towards confrontation with the British government, not only in protest against British sponsorship of the Jewish national home, but also in the demand for an independent nation-state.

On one level, the development of an indigenous national movement in Palestine may not seem to be something that needs to be explained. It was no anomaly. National movements and nation-states have become the norm on a global level since the First World War, but the issue of the origins and spread of Palestinian Arab nationalism is entangled in the polemics of a rivalry with Zionism, a competing national movement in the same land. The two movements, their internal factions and their partisans deploy representations of history in the contemporary pursuit of political ends. On another level, such constructions of history are typical of nationalism as a modern phenomenon. Indeed, nationalism's recent character inspires many of its observers to see it as an artifice fabricated to advance or mask ulterior ends. Contrasting the newness of nationalism against the nationalists' claims for the ancient origins of their nations, Eric Hobsbawm asserts that 'the national phenomenon cannot be adequately investigated without careful attention to the "invention of tradition"'.⁶

This matter underlines the fact that Arab nationalism was articulated on a mass level only during a period of European governance. Prior to this, it was confined almost totally to small associations of bureaucratic-technical elites and military officers during the final years of the Ottoman Empire. For all appearances, most people of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire had regarded themselves as its subjects and, increasingly, its citizens. The ideology of state was Ottomanism, a doctrine that approached secular nationalism in its

assertion of equal rights for all subjects of the sultan and in its conception of a homeland and popular sovereignty. Although no creed by this name was posited until the nineteenth century, Ottomanism drew heavily from classical Ottoman Islamic symbolism, and it preserved Islam as the state religion.⁷

Why, then, did Arab nationalism emerge as a movement of mass appeal after the disappearance of the empire? Although some scholars have explained this as a default choice, it must be observed that such an explanation offers no compelling reason why Arabs under European domination could not have chosen to demand their independence in the name of a reconstituted Islamic empire. Were there specific circumstances that led people to choose Arabism as the basis of political community? This provokes a further question: under what circumstances do people find it in their interests to define themselves as nations generally? This is the central question of the book, and the virtue of a study of the Arab Istiqlal Party in Palestine lies in answering this question. To observe the emergence of the Istiqlal Party as the first true nationalist political party in Palestine is also to watch people make choices about the basis of their political association.

A study of the Istiqlal Party is particularly suited to addressing these questions because members of the party's leadership committee had been Ottoman officials or military officers. The same was true of the larger circle of Istiqlalists of Greater Syria with whom the Palestinians associated. Many of the larger group had belonged to secret, prewar Arabist societies and participated in the Arab revolt against the empire. Their careers as activists thus lasted from the Ottoman period to the time of emerging mass Arab nationalism, and they saw themselves as activists in a new era of popular politics. The party and its activities thus exemplified what Doug McAdam, Sidney Tarrow and Charles Tilly have termed innovative contentious politics, by which new institutions and modes of political advocacy are developed to make demands on the government.⁸ More prosaically, the Istiqlal Party was of signal importance in developing the repertoires of protest that made possible the 1936 Palestinian Arab general strike.

This investigation of the Istiqlal Party and its significance for Palestinian Arab nationalism is divided into eight chapters. In Chapter 1 I provide historical background to the period under review and explain the central concepts employed in the subsequent chapters. Specifi-

cally, in the first chapter I consider several of the suppositions behind what McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly define as contentious politics. Their usage of the term presumes, among other things, a government and especially the modern bureaucratic state. It also presumes the existence of a public, the members of which make demands on the state. The first chapter therefore conceptualizes the relationship between the public, the modern bureaucratic state and nationalism, placing that relationship in a world historical context. This conceptualization is then employed to interpret the beginnings of Arab nationalism during the final years of the Ottoman Empire.

In the same chapter I then investigate the underlying assumptions of British colonial control during the period of the mandate in Palestine. I explore the contradictions between the development of an impersonal bureaucracy on the one hand and the endeavour to rule through local, 'traditional' intermediaries, organized primarily along sectarian lines on the other. In that context, I analyse the linkages among the British administration, the Palestinian political elite and the rest of Palestinian Arabs during the first years of British rule with particular attention to the opportunities for, and constraints against, deploying nationalism as a political resource.

In Chapter 2, I focus on developments between 1927 and 1930. By this time Arab nationalism had become a mark of the acculturation of young Arabs who regarded themselves as a new generation, distinguished by their European-influenced modernist educations. The appearance of these nationalist youths as a self-conscious grouping was located in the expansion of the school system in mandatory Palestine, and especially the proliferation of private Arab schools, which emphasized both *salafi* culture and Arab nationalism. No less important than the schools was a new Arab nationalist history curriculum that activist teachers used in their classrooms. In both developments, veterans of prewar Arab societies and of King Faysal's Damascus government (1918–20) were instrumental in articulating the Arab nationalist worldview to a younger generation.

The emergence of the young nationalists as a distinctive presence in Palestinian affairs took place as the mandatory government expanded its bureaucracy and judicial system. Educated Arabs employed in government posts found that their intensifying sense of Arab culture as a national culture conflicted with colonial officials' expectation that locally recruited civil servants adopt the English language and

British ways as part of their ethos as an administrative elite. After the Western Wall riots of 1929, some of the younger nationalists, influenced by the example of Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian independence movement, took up political activism, endeavouring to organize strikes and demonstrations of protest against British policies. These activists strove to appropriate existing institutions and to make them centres of anti-mandate organization. After civil servants who feared confrontation with the government stymied the activists' efforts, they began to plan an explicitly nationalist vanguard organization to work for Palestine's independence.

The events described in Chapter 2 suggest how a period of crisis can stress existing institutions beyond their capacities to fulfil their functions and so opens the way for new forms of political expression. In Chapter 3, pursuing this proposition further, I examine the nationalist activists' efforts in 1931 to mobilize Palestinian Arabs around the idea of the Arab nation. At the time, the British government, through the MacDonald letter, declared its renewed commitment to the Zionist enterprise and the Palestinian Arab public learnt that the British administration was installing armouries in Jewish settlements. Both crises coincided with the imminent independence of Iraq and the prospect of its unification with Syria. The young nationalists in Palestine therefore coordinated their activities with a network of Arab nationalists in Palestine, Syria, Egypt and Iraq, who attempted to launch a movement for Arab unity and independence and who looked to Iraq's King Faysal for leadership.

The nationalist activists organized demonstrations in Palestine in the summer of 1931, with the protests marking a new pattern of politics that replicated itself and intensified over the next five years. Because popular mobilization around the concept of the nation raised the question of what defined a nation, the activists thus started to look at the relationship between the various concepts of Palestinian, Syrian, and pan-Arab identity.

Another aspect of collective identity among Palestinian Arabs – the relationship between Islam and Arab nationalism – is the main theme of Chapter 4. In exploring this subject, I address the issue of sectarianism and its place in the system of colonial control in the Palestine Mandate. The events surrounding the World Islamic Congress elucidate this point. Held at the end of 1931 in Jerusalem, the Islamic Congress illustrated how the chief mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj

Amin al-Husayni, tried to use Islamic sentiment as a lever over the British in Palestine.

The congress and the developments associated with it also demonstrated that the high commissioner for Palestine was able to increase Hajj Amin's dependence on the British administration for the maintenance of his status as representative of the Palestinian Muslim community. The high commissioner thereby neutralized the mufti's capacity to protest effectively against the mandatory government's policies. The relationship between Hajj Amin and the British was a form of the politics of notables that made religious office and authority requisites for representing a community and that defined a community in terms of its religious affiliation. For Arab nationalists in Palestine, Hajj Amin's relationship with the British was transparently an expression of sectarianism as a means of colonial control, modelled upon the raj in India. Intending to counter this method of domination, a coalition of nationalist youth and veteran nationalists formed the Arab Istiqlal Party in Palestine as an explicitly Arab nationalist association and as a branch of a larger pan-Arab independence movement. In sharp contrast to the sectarian tone of Hajj Amin's pan-Islamic Congress of 1931, the Istiqlalists and their associates undertook to organize a pan-Arab nationalist congress in Baghdad, under the sponsorship of King Faysal.

The focus of Chapter 5 is on Istiqlal Party efforts to put the matters of independence and nationalism to the Palestinian public through a series of rallies and the press. These events represented a conjuncture of several social, cultural and political developments in Palestine that were identifiable from the beginning of the century. Thus, I show that members of the Istiqlal Party, as political activists, were at once products of and conscious agents in the emergence of a public sphere that was sustained by schools, specialized public spaces, new associations, a periodical press and a telecommunications infrastructure.

I assess the extent to which non-elites participated in the public sphere and could be mobilized through it for organized protest. As the party endeavoured to guide the public toward protest against the government's policies, the British administration reflexively acted to regulate the emerging public sphere through new legislation that controlled the press, the expression of dissent and the culture of education. Against this background, I probe the effect of the Istiqlal Party's activities on relationships among the Palestinian Arab political

elite, the public and the government. I end the chapter by examining the party as an aspect of the emergence of new associations, including athletic, scouting, and labour and women's organizations.

Relations among the government, the Palestinian Arab leadership and the public were dynamic, requiring constant monitoring and adaptation of strategies. This is illustrated in Chapter 6, where I show how the system of colonial control created incentives to cooperate with the government. These incentives permeated Palestine's civic, educational, athletic, social and financial institutions. Endeavouring to disable this system of domination, the Istiqlal Party followed the example of Gandhi in India and attempted to launch a programme of non-cooperation against the government.

I demonstrate that a nationalist public sphere was sufficiently developed to oblige Palestinian political leaders to respond to the Istiqlal Party's call for non-cooperation in order to preserve their standing. Efforts by the government and members of the Arab leadership to undermine the party also constituted evidence that the party's programme resonated with Palestinian Arabs. Thus, the Foreign Office put pressure on King Faysal to cancel the pan-Arab Congress, and Palestinian politicians spread the rumour that the Istiqlal Party's secretary general had involved himself in the sale of land to the Zionists, leading to the eviction of its Arab inhabitants. The chapter investigates the evidence for this allegation.

Chapter 7 is an examination of the fruition of the Istiqlal Party's attempts at popular nationalist mobilization. A series of demonstrations in the autumn of 1933, the second of which was massive and well organized, represented the party's success. Other organizers of the demonstrations shared the outlook of the party, thus indicating the degree to which its nationalism and populism had found acceptance among politically aware Palestinians.

The demonstrations, characterized by the organized entry of workers and fellahin into the realm of political action, constituted an innovation in political expression by Palestinian Arabs. This innovation could take place because of both institutional developments and contingent events. In this chapter, therefore, I examine the surge in Jewish immigration since 1931, the effects of the Great Depression, changes in land tenure, urbanization, and the expansion of Arab wage labour in Palestine's economy. Finally, I use the demonstrations and circumstances surrounding them as a means of gauging the relative

strengths of sectarianism and nationalism as resources in popular politics. With the entry of the lower classes into politics, Palestinian politicians increasingly viewed the symbolism and idiom of Arab nationalism as assets to be used in building constituencies. The establishment of four explicitly Arab nationalist political parties and a new Arab nationalist labour union within less than two years of the demonstrations exemplified this outlook.

Chapter 8 takes the form of an epilogue with conclusions. Examining the Istiqlal Party through the lens of the general strike and uprising of 1936, I demonstrate there that the party and the activists associated with it were crucial to the development of repertoires of political protest that sustained a lengthy popular mobilization. In 1935 and 1936 these activists defied the Palestinian political elite, first by organizing popular rallies and protest strikes, then, within months of these, by establishing national committees that coordinated the strike.

In the chapter I survey the course of the Palestinian Arab revolt of 1936 to 1939 and the resulting destruction of the system of colonial control erected jointly by British colonial officials and the Palestinian Arab elite. Finally, I consider the place of Arab nationalism in these developments, thereby returning to the book's point of departure – an investigation of nationalism as a category of analysis and as an expression of political identity.

Chapter 1

Key Concepts and Historical Context

Scholars have remarked that the appearance of nationalism in Europe coincided with the emergence of modern states in the nineteenth century. Unlike earlier forms of the state, which were characterized by vague and fluctuating frontiers, the new nation-states had precise borders, delineated and monitored in systemic relations with other nation-states. The modern states also achieved an unprecedented capacity to become involved in the lives of their citizens by developing professional bureaucracies and expanding legal systems. Because of their impersonal natures, the states typically strove to identify with elements of the cultures of the people they governed.¹ These elements included religion, myths, epics of homeland and folk, and especially language, upon which the information base of the modern state depends. The sociologist Anthony Giddens thus suggests that nationalism can be thought of as the cultural sensibility of administrative power in the bordered nation-state. This does not imply that nationalism is simply the creation of government ministries of information.² In fact, as Giddens says, the administrative power of the modern state 'stimulates divergent and oppositional nationalisms as much as it fosters the coincidence of nationalist sentiments and existing state boundaries'.³

Many of the distinctive institutions of nation-states had their origins in the centralizing programmes of absolutist monarchies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Kings and their ministers, seeking to extend their authority within their realms, relied on large, standing gunpowder armies to destroy 'feudal' military formations and other internal challengers. The absolutist states developed penal systems to discipline their subjects and bureaucracies to collect taxes more directly and carry out censuses.⁴ Similarly, by the end of the

eighteenth century sultans and ministers of the Ottoman Empire had sought to strengthen the state against autonomous local warlords and encroaching foreign powers, and looked to Western Europe for the requisite technologies and methods of administration and war. In the period of Ottoman history known as the Tanzimat (1839–78) the Europeanizing reforms became self-sustaining.⁵ As a consequence, the Ottoman intelligentsia, influenced first by the model of Western European states and later also by Japan, internalized a conception of history as progress towards modernity.⁶ They also came to accept the idea of the nation as the subject of history.

Early Arab nationalism

From the Tanzimat period until the end of the empire, Ottoman reformers radically expanded the administrative reach and repressive means of the state, even as the empire diminished in territorial extent. The empire adopted Western Europe's best military technologies and methods, employing them to subjugate internal challengers like the Janissaries, *derebeys* and provincial *ʿayan* who acted as intermediaries between the state and its subjects. Supported by the extension of telegraph lines and railways, the reformers strove to replace the local grandees with salaried professional bureaucrats committed to enacting the capital's policies in the provinces. The Ottoman government established specialized schools with secular curricula to train the civilian and military functionaries. As one might expect, the same period of bureaucratic expansion saw the fitful emergence of both an official and unofficial press. The empire also adopted European codes of penal and commercial law as well as a system of secular courts to apply them.⁷

Although the reforming bureaucrats' accomplishments never matched their aims, their centralizing policies were sufficiently successful to inspire small liberal movements of protest against the expanded power of the state. The Young Ottomans, a small group of Istanbul bureaucrats and intellectuals, had by the late 1860s advocated that the empire adopt a constitution and parliament as protection from despotism. These institutions they represented as consistent with pristine, uncorrupted Islam. Just as importantly, their emphasis on the empire as a homeland (*vatan*) and their assertion of an Ottoman identity for all the empire's subjects incorporated distinct elements of nationalism.⁸

The ideals of Ottomanism gained realization with the establishment of the first Ottoman constitution and parliament in 1876, but these were short lived. Sultan Abdülhamid II prorogued parliament and suspended the constitution only two years later. His rule emphasized a doctrine of Islamism over Ottomanism and stressed the sultan's role as caliph of all Muslims.⁹ Although Islamism 'neither negated nor superseded Ottomanism', the ideal of the authority of the sultan overshadowed the element of popular sovereignty in Ottomanism.¹⁰ Demographic and territorial changes in the empire reinforced the turn to Islamism after the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877–78. In that conflict, the Ottomans lost the bulk of their European territory with its predominantly Christian population, and the Tanzimat had prepared the way for a 'forward policy' in the Arab provinces, the population of which was overwhelmingly Muslim.¹¹

Although the Hamidian regime advanced its ideology of Islamism, it continued to expand the secularizing and centralizing institutions initiated during the Tanzimat. In Greater Syria and other Arab regions, the sultan's government cultivated members of leading 'ulama' families while it also recruited the sons of landowning elites into the civil service and military, educating them in the new secular state schools or seeking out those trained in European institutions.¹² The reformers viewed their role as modernizing and civilizing Arabs, and hence affirming the modernity of the imperial centre through what Ussama Makdisi has called 'Ottoman Orientalism'.¹³ In the mode of nationalist thought, Ottoman policymakers projected their contemporary advance toward modernity backwards and laid claim to earlier civilizations as part of the Ottoman tradition. The Imperial Museum, established in 1869, excavated and preserved artefacts from Hellenistic and Phoenician archaeological sites. Ottoman warships in 1871 bore such names as *Asur* (Assyria) and *Babil* (Babylon). Arabs entering the imperial service were thus acculturated into the world-view of nationalism, even if they did not consider themselves nationalists. These changes in career paths and cultural outlook had by the second half of the nineteenth century affected the members of Palestine's urban elite.¹⁴

In the same period, Arab provinces experienced in differing degrees an Arab cultural and literary revival (*al-nahdah al-ʿarabiyah*), represented by two principal trends. First, the Arabic language was adapted to incorporate the modern concepts of the physical and

social sciences, technology, commerce and law. It acquired new elements of vocabulary as well as a simpler and more direct style. Second, local presses produced new editions of classical works of Arabic and Islamic literature, making them increasingly available to the Arab readership. The spread of the Arabic printing press, the translation of European writings into Arabic and, from the 1860s onwards, the development and increase in Arabic periodicals – especially newspapers – were central to these two developments.¹⁵ It was, then, a part of the ‘flurry of journals, gazettes, newspapers and pamphlets’ that, as in Western Europe, corresponded in time with the emergence of the bureaucratic state and the beginnings of a public sphere – the realm of social life in which public opinion is formed.¹⁶

No less significant was the appearance of Arabic historical novels. Jurji Zaydan (1861–1914) consciously modelled his more than 20 such books on the works of Sir Walter Scott, who had romanticized and popularized the early history of England. Zaydan shunned political activism but he was nonetheless concerned with Arab history and wrote openly of an Arab nation.¹⁷ Thus, ‘two forms of imagining’, novels and newspapers, characterized the *nahda*. These helped constitute an Arabic print community and, with changes in perceptions of time and space brought by the telegraph and railways, contributed to the sense of what Benedict Anderson, drawing on Walter Benjamin, terms ‘simultaneity’: Although a member of the community entered the physical presence of only a tiny minority of his fellow members, he had ‘complete confidence in [the entire community’s] steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity’.¹⁸

A second cultural trend, paralleling the Islamic modernist component of Young Ottoman ideas, should be situated within the *nahda*. This was the *salafi* movement. As a movement of Islamic modernism, salafism adopted Enlightenment notions of progress driven by human agency and the exercise of reason. It also plumbed early Islamic history for a symbolism in which to ground innovations, particularly new legal, administrative and educational practices. Salafism also associated correct Islamic belief and practice with Arab culture. *Salafi* intellectuals thus emphasized the study of Arabic language and literary classics as well as the development of Arabic as a language capable of expressing the ideas of the modern social and natural sciences.¹⁹

The political content of salafism was not highly developed by the early twentieth century; however, one of its foundational thinkers,

Muhammad ‘Abduh (d. 1905), did attempt to lay the intellectual foundations for a version of natural law that reconciled the notion of a social contract based on rationally derived principles of collective interest with the idea of political community founded upon acceptance of the prophetic message.²⁰ It is especially significant that ‘Abduh advocated Egyptian territorial nationalism – a fact indicating that nationalism among Arabic-speaking populations of the empire did not emerge by a linear process from a distinct previous stage of cultural revival on the model proposed by Miroslav Hroch to describe nationalism in Eastern Europe.²¹

David Commins has illustrated the influence of two Damascene *salafi* intellectuals, Shaykh Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi (1866–1914) and Shaykh Tahir al-Jaza’iri (1852–1920) on a circle of young Arab students at a government secondary school prior to 1905. The heightened Arab cultural consciousness of these students clashed with the Turkish cultural aspect of Ottoman institutions in Syria, which were the products of more than a generation of intensive reforms. All but two of the students’ instructors were Turks, as was their Arabic teacher. Later, these same students continued their educations in Istanbul where they established an Arab cultural society and became involved in the prewar Arab nationalist movement.²² When one of them, Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib, went to Istanbul to attend law school in 1906, he was shocked to find that his fellow Arab students knew the Arabic language poorly, were unfamiliar with Arab high culture, preferred to speak Turkish and were eager to acquire Turkish manners.²³

Although the first Young Turk revolution in 1908 restored the Ottoman constitution and extended press freedoms, the suppression of a counter revolutionary movement in 1909 brought in the government of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), a political party committed to Ottomanism and constitutionalism, but perhaps more so to the extension of the power of the central government. To some of the Arabs in the most direct contact with the state, the Turkish cultural dimension of the empire seemed to have been amplified in the era of CUP rule. Even before the revolution, there had been a Turkish supremacist element within the CUP that was contemptuous of the Arab population.²⁴

However, as Hasan Kayali tells us, the term ‘Young Turk’ is of European origin and ‘the Young Turk movement was unmistakably more

“Ottoman” than its Young Ottoman antecedent, which was a movement of Turcophone Istanbul officials.²⁵ As a loose collection of liberal opposition organizations, the Young Turk movement attracted Arabs – Christian Arabs included – in addition to Turks and other ethnic groups of the empire. But from 1909, vocal elements of the Arab elite, especially in some Syrian and Iraqi cities, perceived that the Ottoman government undertook a policy of Turkification in the Arab provinces, forcing the use of Ottoman Turkish in administration, law courts and schools. This appears to have been more a result of the ongoing expansion of the state’s institutions than any attempt to convert Arabs into Turks.²⁶ Still, the atmosphere of relative freedom following the 1908 revolution gave another impetus to the Arab cultural revival, especially through the Arab press. Within a year, Arabs established 35 newspapers just in Syria, and between the revolution and the First World War more than 60 appeared in Beirut. Some of the papers, such as Beirut’s *al-Mufid*, challenged the CUP government’s centralizing policies and particularly the perceived Turkification of public life. They advocated the devolution of authority to the provincial level, the use of Arabic in schools, courts and administration, and military service for conscripts being confined to the province.²⁷ These newspapers were the driving force in the Arab decentralization movement during the two years preceding the First World War.

In the Arabic press and Ottoman parliament the opposition criticized the CUP for granting a steamer concession on the Tigris to a British firm, for the poor defence of Libya against Italian aggression in 1911 and for the government’s unwillingness to curb Zionist penetration into Palestine. Pro-CUP Arabs also added their voices to the opposition on these issues.²⁸ During the short-lived government of the pro-decentralization Liberty and Entente Party (August 1912 to January 1913), a group of Syrians formed the Ottoman Administrative Decentralization Party (*Hizb al-Lamarakaziyah al-Idariyah al-Uthmani*) in Cairo. The party formed branches in Greater Syria, including four Palestinian cities. At the same time, its supporters set up committees in Beirut, Damascus and Basra to write and negotiate a programme of provincial reform.²⁹ After a CUP coup in January 1913, representatives of the Syrian decentralization movement held a congress in Paris, expressing the same demands. The CUP, under extreme pressure during the second Balkan war, made many of the

concessions demanded by the decentralization movement. Arguably, the CUP also returned in some measure to Islamism.³⁰

Nonetheless, the overall trend towards secularization and centralization in the empire as a whole continued and even strengthened. From 1912, tax reform diminished the role of tax farms and introduced an income tax into some urban areas; a provincial administration law introduced further control over provincial governments and a new regulation brought the *‘ulama’* and religious courts under the authority of the secular appeal courts. After 1915, the Ministry of Justice appointed and dismissed judges of religious courts, the Ministry of Finance took over supervision of the *awqaf* (Islamic endowments) and the European solar calendar replaced the Islamic calendar for all but explicitly religious uses. The government expanded the secular school system, including facilities for women.³¹ The Young Turk governments committed themselves to parliamentary government and elections, though they fell short of qualifying as democratic.³² These policies were only fitfully or partially implemented in the Arab provinces, but there can be no doubt that the general direction and intent of Ottoman reform remained one of countering sectarianism, promoting constitutionalism and expanding impersonal, direct bureaucratic administration.

After the CUP suppressed the reform committees in Syria and Basra, activists resorted to clandestine organizations. Even prior to this, by the end of 1911 Arab Ottoman students in Paris, motivated in part by the hostility they sensed from non-Arab Ottoman officials towards Arabs, established the secret nationalist organization, the Young Arab Society (*al-Jami‘ah al-‘Arabiyyah al-Fatat* or *al-Fatat*). The organizers included the Palestinian ‘Awni ‘Abd al-Hadi who was then a law student anticipating a career in the empire’s growing secular court system.³³ He later became secretary general of the *Istiqlal* Party in Palestine. By the time the CUP triumvirate had acceded to power in 1913, *al-Fatat* included probably 28 members.³⁴ The society was directly involved in the organization of the 1913 First Arab Congress in Paris, and *al-Mufid* served as the society’s organ in Beirut.³⁵ The following summer, Egyptian-born ‘Aziz ‘Ali al-Misri organized a secret society composed primarily of Iraqi military officers. Known as *al-‘Ahd* (the Covenant), it became, along with *al-Fatat*, the most important of several secret Arab nationalist societies.³⁶

On the eve of the First World War, Arab nationalist organizations

in the Ottoman Empire were largely clandestine and incoherent, and some emphasized Syrian and Lebanese identity over pan-Arab identity. All the societies combined probably totalled fewer than 300 members, most of whom were Muslim, Arab Ottoman students, lawyers, officials and military officers.³⁷ To a great degree, they represented an oppositional nationalism stimulated by the expanding administrative power of the Ottoman government.

The international system, mandates, and colonies

The First World War saw the end of the Ottoman Empire and the creation of the League of Nations mandates of Syria, Iraq and Palestine, which the system's architects claimed were nation-states in the making. Great Britain and France, having conquered the Ottoman realm in the Middle East and divided it into spheres of influence, reaped their rewards in the postwar international conferences by gaining recognition as mandatory powers. The League of Nations ostensibly charged the two powers with supervising the creation of the governing institutions in the new, precisely bordered administrative entities until they were prepared to join the system of independent, mutually recognized states of the global community. The notion of a community of states – more significantly a League of *Nations* – is indicative of the manner in which postwar policymakers viewed the world.

In some respects the creation of states in this manner was not new. Since the Congress of Westphalia (1648) following the Thirty Years War, European states had regularly engaged in cycles of wars and congresses, their outcomes being formalized in treaties.³⁸ The central point here is that the cycles of wars and congresses did not simply impose control upon pre-existing states. Rather, the attempts to regulate relations between states were fundamental to the development of the states as distinct territorial units.³⁹

The Napoleonic Wars and ensuing 1815 Congress of Vienna, which formalized the Concert of Europe, was perhaps the most significant episode of wars and congresses for the emergence of the system of states in Europe. With the assembly of the French Empire under Napoleon Bonaparte, French administrative, legal and military innovations were reproduced in areas the French armies had conquered. German states also centralized their administrations to meet the challenge of France, producing what Charles Tilly terms 'direct rule'.

Even after the collapse of the empire, administrative innovations in areas formerly under French control profoundly influenced countries that later emerged, such as Belgium and Italy.⁴⁰

With the final defeat of the Napoleonic armies in 1815, the European powers at the Congress of Vienna felt compelled to avoid mutual annihilation by institutionalizing the principles of balance of power. The boundary drawing diplomats conducted at Vienna expressed the principals of 'containment and reciprocal compensation', so even minor changes to the territorial status quo required the authorization of the majority of the members of the Congress.⁴¹ The congress system extended also to the European powers' policies towards the Ottoman Empire; the Napoleonic Wars roughly mark the beginning of the Eastern Question in European diplomacy.⁴² Though the Crimean War (1854–56) represented a breakdown of the system, the signing of the Treaty of Guarantee by England, France and Austria at the Congress of Paris at the war's conclusion formalized the place of the Ottoman Empire in the European state system.

This absorption of the Ottoman Empire into the European balance of power represented one of two profound and mutually inseparable developments at the international level that drove the Ottoman reforms. The second development was the accelerating integration of the Ottoman Empire into the world economy in the context of the Industrial Revolution. The Anglo–Ottoman Commercial Convention of 1838 and similar treaties opened the empire to almost unrestricted trade with Great Britain and other European powers. In a state system in which coercion and capital reinforced one another, neither of the two developments can be reduced to the other. The Ottoman legal, administrative and military innovations thus constituted responses to the intention of the industrializing states 'to extend [their] own economic system – [their] own laws, [their] own pattern of relations between government and merchants and industrialists – out beyond [their] own borders'.⁴³

Although the Ottoman reformers imported Western European institutions and their associated ideologies, the reformers ultimately intended to preserve the empire in the face of financial, commercial, diplomatic and military encroachment in a manner similar to that of the German states, which had undertaken programmes of centralization to mobilize against the French domination of Europe. The more deeply the Ottoman Empire was absorbed into the European balance

of power, the more pressing was the need for military and administrative reform. The powerful and intrusive nature of the state that these reforms produced generated the conditions under which people began to express their political identity in terms of nationalism. This relationship between balance of power, sovereignty and nationalism reflects Giddens's maxim that '[n]ation-states only exist in systemic relations with other nation-states. The internal administrative coordination of nation-states from their beginnings depends upon reflexively monitored conditions of an international nature. "International relations" is coeval with the origins of nation-states.'⁴⁴

The congress system was an early expression of the variety of continuous monitoring of the balance of power that was required to sustain a pacific system of states. The League of Nations, in the post-First World War period, represented the effort to institutionalize and perpetuate this function in a world in which telecommunications and the industrialization of war permitted an intercontinental projection of force, and in which a system of states could be anticipated to exist on a global level.⁴⁵

Like the previous cycles of wars and peace conferences that had defined the system of states of Europe, the peace conferences that followed the First World War were concerned with drawing boundaries and regularizing relations among the winners in regions of potential conflict. This was a substantial step towards generalizing the nation-state system at the global level. In Egypt, the Levant and the Fertile Crescent, British and French policies resembled remarkably those that had been pursued in the Napoleonic Empire in Europe a century earlier. To maintain their primacy and a regional order, they constructed distorted images of themselves in the form of bordered, centrally administered entities with regularized legal and administrative codes. They endeavoured to tie these entities to themselves through diplomatic and economic bonds. The similarities between the Napoleonic Empire and the imperial system in Asia and Africa are telling with regard to their contribution to the emergence of nation-states. Both entailed contradictions that made the continued dominance of the imperial power untenable, and both left some version of the bordered administrative units that they established intact after they withdrew.

Although Napoleon's government had claimed its commitment to liberty, fraternity and equality, it submitted the areas it conquered to

occupation, onerous taxation, unequal trade and military conscription.⁴⁶ Like the European populations within the Napoleonic Empire, Arab politicians in the interwar period keenly sensed the contradictions inherent in the colonial administrations and expressed their demands for independence in the terms of their occupiers. The mandate system reinforced the notion that independent nation-states were the normal outcome of historical processes and consonant with modernity. It presupposed the existence of nations, properly constituted in states, which came about through stages of development. In this spirit, Article 22 of the League of Nations declared, 'Certain communities formerly belonging to the Turkish Empire have reached *a stage of development* where their existence as independent *nations* can be provisionally recognized subject to the rendering of administrative advice and assistance by a Mandatory until such time as they are able to stand alone'.⁴⁷ Even the term 'Turkish Empire' hints at the degree to which the dominant powers' culture was oriented to the concept of the nation. Demanding independence in a world of nation-states meant demanding independence in the name of a nation.

The contradiction that plagued the League of Nations mandates, like other colonial administrative formations, was that while the mandatory power acknowledged it was charged with preparing a nation for independence, the cultural norms colonial officials made routine in the institutions of administration were those of the mandatory power. This was not by accident. Acculturating local administrators into the colonizing power's language and manners was a principal means through which a power sought to maintain its influence.

If the Ottoman Empire's administration had seemed alien as it expanded into the Arab provinces, European colonial administration produced the same sensation to an exponential power. In the same vein, if the Ottoman Empire's Arab civil servants felt they submerged their own identities to affiliate with institutions of power, then how much more would Arab civil servants in the colonial administration sense that their careers placed them at odds with their own culture?

The irreconcilables that characterized the mandatory system become clearer when they are placed in the larger context of High Imperialism. The final wording of Article 22 was the product of the Supreme Council of the League, comprised of the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan – all imperial powers.⁴⁸ The enshrining of the mandate system during the peace conferences

represented a 'colonial consensus' similar to the Berlin Conference of 1884, which had begun the process of carving up Africa among the European powers and which had also represented the principles of consultation and compensation that previously defined the Concert of Europe. The mandates, described in the league's charter as a 'sacred trust for civilization', differed from older colonies in that most of the mandated areas were intended to see eventual independence; labour was to be protected according to international norms and the mandatory powers were prohibited from monopolizing the commerce of their mandated areas.⁴⁹ However, the concept of the mandates preserved the notions of racial hierarchy that typified the belief and practice of the era of High Imperialism. These notions represented humanity, first as divided into the 'subject races' and the civilized, and then the 'subject races' into hierarchies of race and historical development. In H. S. Wilson's words, 'As in the internal administration of the colonies [the mandates system] embodied racial hierarchy with colonial mandates ranked "A", "B", and "C" – roughly, Arab, Negro African, Khoisan and South Sea Islanders. One ranking reinforced another in a self-sealing ideological system which endorsed race as the basis of social and political organization'.⁵⁰

By this scheme it was 'the victorious imperial powers [that were] fit to discharge "the sacred trust of civilization"'.⁵¹ One historian of the League of Nations has remarked, 'The conception of a sacred trust was not new: and no one had done so much to teach it and to practise it as the man who was for many years the greatest figure in the Mandate Commission, Lord [Frederick] Lugard'.⁵² During the years 1923 to 1936, Lugard served as the British representative on the league's permanent mandates commission. It is not insignificant that Chaim Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organization, saw Lugard as one who was strongly sympathetic to the Zionist movement and who was also able to stand up to officials in the British Colonial Office.⁵³ Lugard's word carried such weight because of his long career as one of the most celebrated colonial officials and as an influential theorist of colonial rule. During his term as high commissioner of Nigeria from 1900 to 1906, he had effectively codified a system of colonial administration known as 'indirect rule', which was based on Social Darwinist hierarchies of race and evolutionary stages of historical development.⁵⁴ Among British colonial officials, especially in African colonies during the era of the mandates, the most

fundamental of assumptions about colonial control was the utility of indirect rule. This meant, in the broadest terms, ruling through native 'traditional' authorities and even reinforcing their stature in a variety of partnership in which the colonial officials were the senior members and final authorities.⁵⁵

Lugard had first circulated his ideas in 1906 in a series of memoranda to British colonial administrators, and he later elaborated on the concept of indirect rule in his book, *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*.⁵⁶ First published in 1922, precisely as the institutions of the Palestine mandate were taking form, the book documents the worldview and working assumptions of a colonial official, which like those of many of the colonial officials in Palestine, were culled from British rule in India and Africa. William Rappard, the director of the League of Nations Mandates Section, referred to the book as 'the bible of the Mandates Section ever since its publication'.⁵⁷ Consistent with the logic that underlay the mandate system, Lugard identified in Africa a racial hierarchy that began with 'the purest negro types' whose social organization ranged from acephalous tribes 'up to those with well-defined tribal institutions, till they merge into the second class of more "advanced communities"'.⁵⁸ Of these last, Lugard perceived that 'a few have evolved systems of government more or less efficient under paramount rulers ... [but were] unable to evolve a written language, or any approach to culture'.⁵⁹ Above these 'self-evolved' groups on a scale of societal evolution were the Muslims of Africa, who owed their more advanced state to the adoption of 'an alien monotheistic religion, which brought with it a written language' and 'an admixture of Aryan and Hamitic blood'.⁶⁰ The resulting population 'possessed greater powers of social organization than the negro aborigines, and may therefore claim to be of superior race type'.⁶¹

Lugard characterized each community, with the exception of the most primitive, as having institutions through which the colonial official ruled; the same duties and functions, however, could not be conferred upon all the various communal leaders. Among the Muslims, Lugard identified literacy through the use of Arabic, a system of education, and institutions of taxation and law that placed their communities at the top of evolutionary progression. Although he accepted the proposition that Islam 'is a religion incapable of the highest development', he deemed the Islamic communities such as the Muslim emirates of northern Nigeria to be most capable of

autonomy in the colonial system. He regarded them as self-organizing political units, with the colonial officials insulated from the taint of interference with the mass of colonial subjects by dealing with them solely through the *amirs*, whose status the officials elevated.⁶² The *amirs*, then, constituted a part of the broad category Ronald Robinson has called collaborating or mediating elites.⁶³

Thus, the anthropological principles that were understood to guide the governance of the colonial subjects properly were the same as those that prescribed the hierarchical system of the mandates. By this logic, Palestine, as an A mandate, was naturally suited for indirect rule. This is not to argue that colonial officials in Palestine took their policies from *The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa*, but rather that as men – and more rarely women – who came to political maturity in the era of High Imperialism, they shared with Lugard a body of beliefs and lore about ‘subject races’ and the means by which they could be governed. However, it is also significant that Herbert Samuel, the first high commissioner of Palestine, had no previous experience in colonial administration, but as a young member of parliament he had decided to make African colonial affairs his area expertise and read widely on the subject after 1899. He recalled much later, ‘Sir Frederick Lugard’s *Our East African Empire* especially impressed me.’⁶⁴

Ultimately, it was the British experience in India that created the template for colonial control in other areas, including Palestine. Lugard, born in India and having served as a military officer in the northwestern principalities and in the Sudan, expressly acknowledged the British raj in India and administration in Egypt as models for successful indirect rule.⁶⁵ The establishment of British administration in Egypt was the achievement of Lord Cromer (Evelyn Baring), who formerly served as personal secretary to the Viceroy of India and as financial member of the Council of India. He, in many respects, replicated administrative practices of India in Egypt.⁶⁶ The military government that came with the British occupation of Palestine and that lasted from the end of 1917 until July 1920 was effectively an extension of the British administration in Egypt and the Sudan. In the latter, Lugard’s methods of indirect rule were especially influential. Many of the soldiers who had staffed the military government in Palestine stayed on to serve in its civilian successor.⁶⁷ These included Ronald Storrs, who soon after his classics studies at Cam-

bridge, trained in Cromer's Egyptian civil service and became his oriental secretary. After the war he served as military governor of Jerusalem.⁶⁸ More generally, it can be said that as the civilian government of the Palestine mandate became a part of the British colonial system, it increasingly relied on administrators who brought with them their personal and institutional memories of colonial rule in India, Egypt, the Sudan, Kenya, South Africa and other colonies.⁶⁹

It is also telling that Chaim Weizmann tapped Frederick Kisch to serve as director of the Palestine Zionist Executive's Political Department, and thus as the World Zionist Organization's man on the spot in Palestine and principal liaison with the British administration. Kisch was a former officer in the British army, born in India to a father who was a senior official in the Indian civil service. The younger Kisch had served in the Indian army and, during his wartime service in France, commanded an Indian unit.⁷⁰

Possibly the most significant event for the development of the principles of indirect rule in India was the rebellion of the sepoys in 1857. After that, the British view of Indian royalty as corrupt, despotic and needing to be modernized was replaced by the idea that the nobility was a source of stability.⁷¹ To rule indirectly through the princes removed colonial administrators from the sort of disruptive intervention that inspired popular resentment. British administrators thus made Mogul princes and Rajputs partners in the maintenance of a traditional order and, in one of the most well-known examples of the 'invention of tradition', the *durbars* – formerly gatherings of Mogul princes – came to be celebrations of the status of Indian royalty and demonstrations of British endorsement of that status.⁷² In a similar manner, the Hindu caste system was regarded as an 'integrated and coherent hierarchy'⁷³ that served indirect rule, and landlords were seen, like the British gentry, as the proper intermediaries with the conservative peasantry. Arguably, officials who, like Lugard, gained titles of nobility through their imperial service, saw in colonial society a reflection of the ideal of British society as a 'landed, layered order'.⁷⁴

Whereas colonial officials associated rural interests with stable tradition and noble intermediaries, the officials perceived the principle threat to this order as coming from the urbanized, educated, Anglophone Indians trained to serve in English-style law courts and colonial bureaucracies. In his famous 1835 note on education, Thomas Babington Macaulay conceived of them as 'a class who may

be interpreters between us [the British] and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect'.⁷⁵ They were analogous to the later generation of European-educated Africans whom Lugard claimed were 'separated from the rest of the [indigenous] people by a gulf which no racial affinity can bridge'.⁷⁶ They constituted another variety of indigenous mediators, but by the time of Cromer and Lugard, British officials regarded these local English-speaking elites as potential troublemakers, an outlook that carried over to Palestine. By virtue of their educations, and often by virtue of their educations in England, they engaged the discourses of modernity, equality before the law, participatory government and national identity.

The significance of this for Palestine will become clear later. At this point it can be observed that the main thrust of Ottoman reform, especially since 1909, had been the advancement of direct rule, impersonal bureaucracy and participatory government, as well as the cultivation of a national identity, ending sectarianism and the progressive transformation of society. The British, by contrast, brought with them to the Palestine mandate a long experience of colonial control that dictated precisely the opposite policies. The policies they pursued in Palestine therefore emphasized sectarian division over nationalism, conservatism over change and rule through notable intermediaries rather than through an impersonal bureaucracy. No less importantly, they displayed a marked fear of liberal education for Palestinian Arabs. Consequently, their policies signalled a reversal of significant aspects of Ottoman reform, and they contradicted the principle of the mandatory system that charged them with preparing the mandated areas for functioning as independent nation-states.

Syria and Palestine

In another episode in the cycle of wars and peace conferences, Allied delegates in the Italian city of San Remo drew the rough borders for the mandates of Iraq, Syria and Palestine in April 1920. The intentions of the delegates at San Remo directly opposed those of a Syrian congress convened only weeks previously in Damascus. That assembly, including Palestinian and Lebanese representatives, had declared the complete independence of geographic Syria from the Taurus Mountains to the Gulf of Aqaba. The same congress named as the county's king Amir Faysal ibn Husayn, who had led Hijazi fighters allied with

the British against the Ottoman army during the recent war. Of the congress's 120 delegates, 35 were members of al-Fatat, which had re-established itself soon after the formation of Faysal's administration in Damascus in the autumn of 1918. Comprised of upper-level officials of the new state, the party attained a membership of about 200. Some members had participated in the Arab revolt against the Ottoman government, while others joined the new administration after the war in the manner of many other skilled Arabs who came to Damascus seeking official appointments. Most significantly, al-Fatat became Faysal's official party, which he, in some large measure, financed.⁷⁷

Although the association remained clandestine and restricted its membership to Faysal's inner circle of associates, its leaders established the Arab Istiqlal Party in February 1919 as al-Fatat's public organization. The party's membership reached about 2500, with perhaps 20,000 supporters. The organizers intended the new party to mobilize Syrians and Palestinians around the principles of Arab unity and complete independence.⁷⁸ It was, however, perceived by many to be the government's party, and it thus attracted to its ranks members who simply sought patronage and career opportunities.⁷⁹

The Palestinian faction of al-Fatat concentrated on resistance to Zionism and supporting Palestine's unification with Greater Syria. Towards those ends it participated in several organizations.⁸⁰ One was al-Nadi al-ʿArabi (the Arab Club), which foreign observers considered to be the leading public nationalist organization in Damascus, and which also maintained branches in Palestine. Such contacts enabled al-Fatat to lobby Palestinian politicians to support the idea of the unity of Palestine with Syria before the American King–Crane commission of inquiry in 1919 and at the first Palestine Arab congress the same year. The Arab Club, and to a lesser extent the Istiqlal Party, organized popular protests in Syrian and Palestinian cities to deter Faysal from any accommodation with the French that infringed on Syria's independence and unity.⁸¹ James Gelvin proposes that 'The mobilizing activities undertaken by these activists during the Faysali period proved to be both precursor to and progenitor of numerous similar episodes.' He further suggests that the subsequent expansion of nationalism in Arab regions 'was an episodic process, driven by crises and effected by organizers who learned from and enlarged upon the efforts of their predecessors'.⁸² As we shall see, later the developments in Palestine provide strong evidence for his thesis.

A series of critical events in 1920 – the League of Nations awarding the Palestine mandate to Britain in April, the expulsion of Faysal and his government by French forces in July and the establishment of civilian administration in Palestine the same month – weakened Damascus as the centre of Arab nationalism and left the question of Palestinian unity with Syria a dead issue. Palestine's prewar experience of Zionist colonization and, through the Balfour Declaration, its association with the British administration in Palestine were especially important. These developments heightened the sense among the Palestinian elite of a specifically Palestinian Arab political identity.⁸³

As a congress of leading Palestinian Arabs in 1920 recognized the political and administrative separation of Palestine from Syria, Palestine began to acquire its features as a centrally administered, precisely bordered entity. A 1921 conference of colonial officials in Cairo, convened by Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, divided the area designated for the mandate of Palestine into two parts within the same mandate, the two being designated as Palestine and Transjordan. The latter was subsequently constituted as a monarchy and a client of Great Britain that was excluded from Zionist colonization.⁸⁴ Its progress towards independence and its constitutional development took a path divergent from that of Palestine, although the two functioned under a shared customs regime and currency.⁸⁵

The separation of Palestine from Syria and Lebanon was more complete. In 1923, the latter of two Anglo–French survey teams delineated the final border between Palestine and French-mandated Syria, which included Lebanon. The border followed no distinct geographic barrier and was influenced by no prior administrative separation.⁸⁶ In fact, Palestine as far south as the ʿAwjah (Yarkon) River, on the northern edge of present-day Tel Aviv, had had Beirut as its provincial capital in the final decades of the Ottoman state. Beirut had also served as a commercial centre and port for northern Palestine. Palestinians commonly married into families from Beirut, Damascus and other Syrian cities, and no distinct Arabic dialects corresponded to the new political borders.⁸⁷ With the establishment of the mandate system, Syria and Palestine became subject to two different metropolises, political cultures, imperial traditions, legal systems, currencies and tariff regimes. The populations of the two entities bore different passports and identity papers.

Great Britain's exercise of control over Arab areas of the Middle

East was consistent with its long experience in colonial practice, as discussed in the previous section. British governance manifested its historic affinity for monarchy, nobility and tradition, as well as a willingness to invent traditions as needed to serve the purposes of empire. Such considerations guided imperial policymakers in their support for members of the Hashemite family as monarchs in the Hijaz, Transjordan, and Iraq. As descendants of the Prophet Muhammad and as a leading family of the holy city of Mecca, they had the attributes of nobility that made them attractive as proxies for indirect British rule.⁸⁸ No less attractive was their weakness as political leaders, which made them ultimately dependent on British support. When, in 1924, the senior Hashemite, the Sharif Husayn saw his kingdom of the Hijaz conquered by his rival from the Najd, 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, British imperial planners had no trouble coming to terms with the new monarch. Sharif Husayn's son Faysal, whom British authorities ensconced as their client ruler over Iraq after the French expelled him from Damascus, proved more durable but no less dependent on British backing. The same was at least as true of his older brother 'Abdullah, who ruled Transjordan.

However, the situation in the Palestine mandate was different. There, the Zionist movement, which had begun to colonize the country in the 1880s, was the principal proxy for British control. The British government had expressed its support for a Jewish national home in Palestine in the 1917 Balfour Declaration and further obligated itself to the development of the Jewish national home under the terms of the League of Nations mandate, which took effect in 1923. This was not the first time Britain's imperial strategists had turned to a settler movement to secure control of a strategic area and to make its administration affordable through taxable economic development. They had pursued the same policy after 1900 in British East Africa (later Kenya). Although most of the colonists came first from South Africa and later from Great Britain, the Colonial Office in 1903 had in fact looked to the World Zionist Organization to provide the settlers.⁸⁹ The scheme, remembered in Zionist history as 'the Uganda project', ultimately fell through and had hardly been greeted with universal enthusiasm within the Zionist movement.⁹⁰ The East African experience nonetheless represented some continuity in Zionist strategy. A few years before, Theodore Herzl had tried unsuccessfully to persuade the German government of the advantages of declaring a

German protectorate in Palestine, with a private Zionist colonization company being granted concessionary privileges. The model for his company was taken from the chartered companies of the African colonies.⁹¹

Despite the early Zionist movement's association with the prewar imperialist impulse, Zionism was not purely imperialism's emanation. It was a national movement, in many respects, like others of the time; it developed partly in response to illiberal nationalism and anti-Semitism in Europe, which were versions of the same racial and national attitudes that underlay the colonial system.⁹² Also, relations between Zionist settlers and the metropole in London were quite different from those of settler societies like Kenya, Algeria, and Libya.⁹³ The dissimilarity was partly due to cultural and linguistic differences between British officialdom and Jewish immigrants, most of whom originated from central and eastern Europe. The British officials' distrust of the Jews, coupled with anti-Semitism, sustained considerable tension between the Palestine administration and the Zionist movement.⁹⁴

Although relations between the Zionist movement and British colonial officials generated their share of friction, Zionist settlement could not have taken place without the protection of the British military and police. From the aspect of British interests, the Jewish contribution to Palestine's economy came to represent the preponderant source of tax revenues to the mandatory government's budget. It was therefore crucial to financing the British strategic presence on the right flank of the Suez Canal with its air bases, port facilities, oil pipeline terminal and railways.⁹⁵ Thus, the alliance of the Zionist movement with British imperial interests was an uncomfortable one and one that eventually unravelled, but it was an alliance nonetheless.

The obligation to aid the establishment of the Jewish national home in Palestine precluded indirect rule through some indigenous noble lineage. Despite this, other aspects of traditional British colonial methods of indirect rule were apparent. Consistent with practices in colonial Africa, India and Iraq, the Palestine government did not attempt to bring the Negev Bedouin under a uniform code of civil and criminal law. The government instead reinforced the arbitrating authority of the *shaykhs* over their tribes by authorizing such practices as trial by ordeal.⁹⁶ The policy signified the reversal of the Ottoman government's efforts to extend the centralizing project of the

state to the Arab and Kurdish tribes as exemplified by the Imperial Tribal School.⁹⁷

The British military (and subsequent civilian) administration also displayed the colonial strategy of portraying itself as a partner in tradition. This was clear from its policy on the observance of the Nabi Musa festival each spring. This Islamic festival, specific to Palestine, took the form of a week-long celebration and pilgrimage to the tomb and shrine of the prophet Moses (Maqam al-Nabi Musa) near Jericho. In Ottoman times, the Muslim dignitaries of villages around Jerusalem would present the Ottoman governor in Jerusalem with the banners of their villages on the first Friday of the festival.

From the time of the British military administration in Palestine, officials began to convert the Nabi Musa festival into a miniature version of the Indian *darbar*. Thus, the British governor of Jerusalem took up the former role of the Ottoman governor in accepting the presentation of the banners. In 1920 and again in 1921, the Indian regiment of the British army in Palestine marched alongside the procession for the presentation of banners. The civilian government in Palestine later elaborated on these practices, adding a British military band to the procession.⁹⁸ As was the case with the Indian *darbars*, the message sent by so public an endorsement of local practice was that British policy was one that protected tradition rather than threatened it. No less importantly, the intent of the government was to add to the honour and status of the local leadership in the eyes of all classes of Palestinian Muslims, and thus to strengthen traditional elites through whom the British intended to rule.

The main reason why the civilian administration contributed a military band to the pomp of the Nabi Musa festival in 1920 was because it was taking place at a time of nationalist and religious conflict. The festival was held less than a month after the Syrian General Congress had declared all of geographic Syria with its Palestinian region to be an independent and indivisible country. It also took place in the same month as Britain obtained recognition as the mandatory power in Palestine. In the weeks before, nationalist activists affiliated with the Arab government in Damascus had staged demonstrations in several Palestinian cities to show support for Palestinian independence within Syrian unity and to demonstrate opposition to Zionism. After the military government banned the processions, the activists turned to the Nabi Musa proceedings in

Jerusalem to fulfil the same purpose. Thus, it was one expression of the popular mobilization that was taking place in Syrian cities to the north at the same time. In contrast to the peaceful demonstrations in the weeks before, riots broke out and assumed a sectarian character, resulting in the deaths of five Jews and four Muslims and injuries to 251 people of both communities.⁹⁹

The military administration of Palestine ended in July 1920, transferring its authority to Palestine's first high commissioner, Sir Herbert Samuel, who was Jewish and a Zionist. The new civilian administration, still staffed by many officials from the military government, intensified its efforts to cultivate a collaborating Palestinian leadership that would find it in its interests to maintain calm in Palestine.¹⁰⁰ The increased attention given to the Nabi Musa festival was but one of the ways in which British officials displayed their preference for ruling through mediating elites whom they viewed as being representatives of tradition. Just as apparent was the colonial officials' propensity to reinforce religious institutions and sectarian division while suppressing any semblance of popular nationalism. There can be no doubt that the central institution for the realization of these policies was the Supreme Muslim Council (SMC).

Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the Supreme Muslim Council

The SMC was a British administrative novelty that had not existed in the Ottoman period, though it was designed to replace the *'ulama'* hierarchy formerly responsible to the Shaykh al-Islam in Istanbul. Established in late 1921, the council's function was to manage religious affairs, endowed trusts (*awqaf*, singular *waqf*), and Islamic law (*shari'ah*) courts in Palestine virtually free of British interference. It thus insulated the mandatory administration from disruptive interference in Muslim civic and religious affairs. The senior position in the SMC was the presidency, an office established through a combination of the offices of the chief mufti of Jerusalem and the president of the Shari'ah Court of Appeals. During the military administration, British officials came to see in the position of chief mufti a representative of Palestine's Muslim community.¹⁰¹ At the time, the mufti of Jerusalem had been Kamil al-Husayni, a member of a leading Jerusalem family claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad. The al-Husayni family had provided not only many of the city's chief muftis, but also other government officials, including

most recently the city's mayor, Musa Kazim al-Husayni. When Kamil al-Husayni died in 1921, the high commissioner, influenced by petitions from a broad spectrum of Muslim Palestinians, appointed as mufti Amin al-Husayni, Kamil's much younger half-brother and Musa Kazim's nephew.¹⁰²

Only 26 years old at the time of his appointment, Amin al-Husayni had already demonstrated himself to be politically ambitious and competent, even talented. He was one of many educated young Palestinians who had gone to Damascus offering their services to Faysal's government, and there he had joined the reformulated al-Fatat. As a nationalist activist and leading member of Jerusalem's Arab Club, he mobilized support for Palestine's independence within Syrian unity. He was prominent among those who attempted to turn the Nabi Musa festival of 1920 into an Arab nationalist demonstration. Al-Husayni's involvement in the Arab nationalist movement seems to have begun when he joined one of the secret Arab decentralization societies prior to the war. He had taken his advanced education at the Ottoman military academy, where a clandestine Arab nationalist association might have influenced him. The army commissioned him as an officer in 1916, and he was in Jerusalem recovering from an illness in 1917 when British forces captured the city. In that period, al-Husayni threw in his lot with them, serving as a recruiting officer for Arab fighters against the Ottomans.¹⁰³

It is significant that little in al-Husayni's early career suggests any ambition to serve in high religious office. His political orientation was plainly Arab nationalist by the end of the war, and he had received his advanced education in the most secular of Ottoman institutions. He had, though, performed the hajj as a teenager in the company of his mother. He thus acquired the honorific 'hajj' and is almost always referred to in contemporary sources as Hajj Amin. He also studied the Islamic sciences briefly at al-Azhar University in Cairo, but took no degree and was in no manner recognized as a member of the 'ulama'. At al-Azhar, the *salafi* intellectual Rashid Rida befriended him and remained a mentor to him until Rida died in 1935.¹⁰⁴ To the extent that Hajj Amin thought in *salafi* terms, he was certainly more typical than unique among the Arab nationalists of his generation.

Thus, it was not scholarly religious credentials that made Hajj Amin an attractive candidate for president of the SMC in the eyes of colonial officials. Rather, it was the combination of his being an

effective nationalist activist and a member of one of Jerusalem's most respected notable families that made it advantageous to align his interests with those of the British administration and thereby keep him on a short tether. During two meetings with High Commissioner Samuel in April 1921, Hajj Amin expressed his desire for good relations with the government and his willingness to see that the disturbances of 1920 (for which he had been prosecuted and later pardoned) would not be repeated. Samuel was therefore satisfied that the government had found an effective and accommodating intermediary with the Muslim community, and he had Hajj Amin appointed chief mufti in May. The way was thus paved for his election by a committee of electors as president of the SMC the following December.¹⁰⁵

As president of the council, Hajj Amin was very nearly an employee of the British administration. Government *Blue Books* and *Civil Service Lists* included the president and the four members of the SMC as belonging to the governmental administration. The order of 1921 that formulated the SMC provided for the government to supplement the salaries of the council members that were paid chiefly through *waqf* funds.¹⁰⁶ With such incentives for collaboration, Hajj Amin remained true to his commitment to strive to maintain public order and good relations with the government. In May 1921, as the council was being established, rioting broke out in Jaffa between Jewish immigrants and Palestinian Arabs, in the course of which about 100 people were killed.¹⁰⁷ This, however, was the last major episode of intercommunal violence until 1929 – a fact that no doubt seemed to vindicate the logic of establishing the SMC as a linchpin in the machinery of colonial control.

The patent sectarianism manifested in the British creation of the SMC was an extension of the British perception that Palestine's population was comprised not of a nation or national groups, but of several religious communities. The same perception was articulated in the mandate document, which regarded 'Jewish' and 'non-Jewish' as the universe of categories for Palestine's population, and in the government's 1922 and 1931 censuses, which categorized Palestine's population as Muslims, Christians and Jews. The category of Arab was conspicuously absent.¹⁰⁸ This conceptualization expressed how the ideas underlying the system of mandates, 'not only enabled nations to be imperial powers', as Prasenjit Duara says, 'but also

necessitated a cultural project to maintain the colonies as non-nations'.¹⁰⁹

This outlook was carried over to Palestine from India and Egypt where British administrators did not merely doubt the existence of a unifying national identity, but thwarted its development by creating sectarian institutions as a matter of policy.¹¹⁰ In fact, it seems likely that the military administration's decision to extend the chief mufti of Jerusalem's authority to the whole country was modelled on the role of the chief mufti of Egypt.¹¹¹ The autonomy the mandatory government granted to the SMC in the management of *waqf* properties was another reversal of late Ottoman policies, which had striven to bring such property under the supervision of the government.¹¹² The financial support that the British administration soon provided for the SMC to restore Jerusalem's al-Aqsa Mosque was consistent with the tradition of indirect rule by demonstrating government's efforts to appear as a partner in the preservation of hallowed tradition.¹¹³

Clearly the traditional system that British administrators intended to uphold was a version of the *millet* 'system', which had allowed great autonomy to Ottoman religious communities. The Ottoman reformers had sought to replace it with the bureaucratic state, and it seems that the *millet* system might never have been as systematic and as comprehensive as either Ottoman or British officials imagined.¹¹⁴ Both the appointment of Hajj Amin as chief mufti and the creation of the SMC reflected the ingrained conservatism of colonial administrators, who sought to treat colonial populations through established hierarchies and elites, and even to create them where they were lacking. Ronald Storrs's assertion that '[Hajj Amin] honestly regards himself as the elected *millet-bashi* [head of the community] of the Moslems of Palestine for all purposes' is as enlightening about Storrs's outlook as it is about Hajj Amin's.¹¹⁵

Hajj Amin's transformation from nationalist organizer to Muslim dignitary was emblematic of the larger strategy of sectarian division. He used his position to promote himself as a Palestinian leader by appointing his supporters and family to positions in the SMC's administrative machinery.¹¹⁶ The council became such an effective machine for the generation of patronage that until 1937 the dominant rift in Palestinian political life was between those who supported Hajj Amin as the president of the council, known as the Majlisi faction, and those who opposed him – a looser coalition referred to simply as

the Opposition (al-Muʿaridun).¹¹⁷ Consequently, the overriding basis of political affiliation within the Palestinian Arab elite resulted from competition over what was in the first place a religious office, and the deepest schism running through the political elite reflected a set of interests produced by the sectarianism of colonial control.

The Palestinian political elite

Palestinian elites at the end of the First World War were less inclined to express their collective political identity in sectarian terms than the British apparently presumed or hoped. As much as other politically aware and educated people of the post-First World War world, they were largely beginning to expect nation-states to replace the old multi-ethnic empires. Apart from the profound effects on Palestinians of late Ottoman cultural and political trends and of the question of unity with Faysal's Syrian kingdom discussed above, other regional developments reinforced the concept of the nation-state as the proper political unit for the new era. In neighbouring Egypt, where many Palestinians studied and maintained commercial relations, territorial nationalism had existed as a political force for well over a generation – slightly longer in fact than the British occupation of the country. In 1919 Egypt exploded in a popular revolt and, over the next few years, the first nationalist political party with an extensive grassroots organization emerged in Egypt. This party, the Wafd, and its leader, Saʿd Zaghlul, acquired almost iconic status among nationalists in Palestine, as we shall see. Contemporaneously, resistance led by Turkish nationalists and republicans expelled Greek and British forces from Anatolia and the tip of eastern Rumelia. As a result, the republicans effectively gained recognition for independent Turkey in 1922. This development raised high hopes in Palestine that the foreign occupation could be reversed and that the Turkish republic could mediate between Palestine and the colonial powers.¹¹⁸

It was against this backdrop that each year, from 1918 to 1923, the Palestinian political leadership held national congresses to call for independence and to express opposition to Zionism, as well as to determine a common stance towards the mandatory government. In December 1920, five months after French forces had ended the independent Arab government in Damascus, the third Palestinian Arab congress accepted both the separation of Palestine from northern geographic Syria and the need to come to some accommodation

with the British authorities. It was also at this congress that, with 37 delegates present, the Arab executive committee of the Palestinian Arab Congress was first elected as the nine-member permanent body representing Palestinian Arab national interests to the government.¹¹⁹ The body elected Musa Kazim al-Husayni as its president and he remained in the position until his death in 1934. The Arab executive never gained official recognition from the government on the model of the Jewish Agency since the British government preferred to deal with the Arab community on a sectarian basis.¹²⁰ It is an indication of the success of this policy in undercutting a coherent national movement that, at the sixth congress in 1923, the factional infighting was intense enough to prevent the convening of a national congress for another five years.¹²¹

Nevertheless, the demand for independence and the nationalism of the Palestinian elites was sufficient to inspire the British to strive to quarantine these tendencies within what both the British and many in the Palestinian leadership would regard as the political classes. Hence, another dimension of the government's efforts to bind the interests of the Palestinian leadership to the government took the form of proposals for advisory and legislative councils, with part of their membership appointed by the government and the elected membership representing the population according to religious community. These councils, like other institutions of colonial control, had their origins in British colonial practice in India and became generalized in British colonies and protectorates from east Asia to Africa. Contemptuously referred to by Lord Cromer as 'mock parliaments', they were intended to allow a highly restricted participation in governance to the educated local elites in return for their acquiescence in British authority.¹²²

In the case of Palestine, the price of participating in the council was recognition of the mandate and its Jewish national home provisions. This was not a price the Palestinian Arab leadership could politically afford to pay and Palestinian Arabs widely boycotted the government's attempt to hold elections for a legislative council in 1923.¹²³ However, many in the leadership reconsidered this stance over the next several years as the political atmosphere changed and as they became more secure in their roles as client politicians.¹²⁴

Broadly speaking, the opposition politicians were more inclined than the Majlisi to accept British dominance in Palestine and to come

to a limited acceptance of the Zionist movement. Many in fact accepted or sought subsidies from the Zionists, who endeavoured to exploit divisions within the Palestinian political leadership.¹²⁵ Both factions, in their relations with the mandatory government, revealed their origins as groupings of Ottoman notables defined by two characteristics. First, they had access to state power, permitting them to act as intermediaries with the government on behalf of their popular followings. Second, the fact that these notables had followings gave the state its incentive to cultivate the Palestinian leadership as dependants of the state. Thus, the competition between the two factions was waged both for access to the government and for the allegiances of their followings. This meant that Palestinian leaders, like those of other societies under colonial control, undertook political action that oscillated between the poles of resistance and collaboration, seeking to reconcile the expectations of their followers with those of the government.¹²⁶

To speak of the Palestinian political elite at the start of the mandate is to refer to a small, heterogeneous status group that owed its influence to late Ottoman reforms and to the integration of Palestine into the world economy. Like many other areas of the Mediterranean basin, Palestine exported cash crops to finance imports of European processed goods through the port cities.¹²⁷ Locally, entrepreneurs who collectively and individually combined land ownership, tax farming, banking and commerce organized this interchange. At the heart of their activities was the linking of European markets and sources of capital to rural Palestinian producers.¹²⁸ The legal profession also provided specialized access to the web of commercial linkages, but it did not exclude engaging in landownership or commerce.¹²⁹ The same was at least as true of service in the Ottoman government. There were no distinct and separate classes of landowners, merchants and government officials. Merchants and landowners commonly sought at least minor posts in the expanding Ottoman bureaucracy, sending their sons to state schools or foreign institutions in preparation. Such was a way of securing influence in governing circles, and involvement in administration also opened opportunities for registering land or gaining tax-farming concessions.¹³⁰

As the world economic system progressively absorbed Palestine, agricultural land became a commodity in which merchants invested, and the total area of land under cultivation expanded steadily in the

period prior to the First World War. There is evidence that most large landowners resided in port cities, thus reflecting the social and economic importance these cities gained in the last half of the nineteenth century as points of contact with European and regional markets. Not only Palestinian Arabs and later Zionists acquired land in Palestine, but also residents of Damascus, Alexandria and especially Beirut.¹³¹ Landowners and tax farmers were natural intermediaries between the peasantry and the Ottoman state. For landowners and tax farmers alike, the relationship with the peasantry was based on a mixture of market relations, legal obligations and personal ties of patronage. These relationships underwent constant change as tax farms were converted into private land, as capital-intensive agriculture began to undermine villages as self-organized productive units, and as peasant production began to be transformed into wage labour.¹³²

One of the most important of these changes involved the emergence of citriculture and other fruit production. Mainly in the form of orange groves, this was a capital-intensive variety of agriculture that attracted Arab and Jewish investors from the last quarter of the nineteenth century onwards. It was a form of plantation economy stimulated by the direct link of Palestinian land and labour with European markets and capital. Orange production relied on seasonal wage labour in the groves as well as in the packing and shipping processes that were organized around the port of Jaffa by the 1870s.¹³³

Such were the main trends that produced the political elite by the time the British administration came to the country. Our best information tells us that the leadership that convened and attended the Palestinian national congresses and that formed the most important political associations of the mandatory period was overwhelmingly an urban group, referred to commonly in the sources of the period and by subsequent scholars as the *ʿayan* or *dhawat*.¹³⁴ It is only a minor oversimplification to distinguish this group from the rural leadership (of villages and small towns) known as *wujuh* or *wujihaʿ*, but many of the *ʿayan* had their origins as rural leaders and were in fact of recent provenance. The ability of rural *wujuh* to transform themselves into urban *ʿayan* derived from the economic and administrative changes outlined above, and the transformation continued throughout the period under review.¹³⁵

The urban-dwelling leaders represented around 16 cities and large towns; members of Jerusalem's elite were prominent in both numbers

and influence.¹³⁶ This was due in part to the city's function under the Ottoman regime of having been the capital of an independent *sancak* (sub-province) since 1874, its governor reporting directly to Istanbul. Jerusalem's administrative function reflected its status as the focus of attention for three world religions and intense great-power involvement in its affairs.¹³⁷ When the British designated Jerusalem the capital of the Palestine government, the *sancaks* of Nablus and Acre, formerly administered through the provincial capital of Beirut, were subordinated to it. Thus, the political affairs of Jerusalem became even more the political affairs of Palestine. Jerusalem was also the largest urban centre in the country. Its population at 62,578 in 1922 and reaching 90,503 in 1931 included a considerable foreign population and large communities of non-Muslims. The largest of these was the Jewish, representing over half the city's population.¹³⁸ The Jewish community contained discrete sub-communities that differed widely in language, religious practice and ideological orientation.¹³⁹ Jerusalem's Arab leadership, then, functioned in a cosmopolitan environment, an effect heightened by the fact that since 1892 a railway to Jaffa had closely tied Jerusalem to the commercial developments on the coast.¹⁴⁰

Approaching the influence and numbers of Jerusalem's Arab elite were those residing in Jaffa, Haifa and Nablus.¹⁴¹ The port cities of Jaffa and Haifa were respectively the second and third largest urban concentrations in Palestine and the principal links to the rest of the Mediterranean world. As we have seen, many of the large landowners resided in these two cities. Jaffa, as the main port and commercial centre for Gaza and Jerusalem, had seen its land area and population grow in multiples from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. By 1931 its population had expanded to 51,866 from 32,524 in 1922. About 7000 of the 1931 population were Jews. Along the northern edge of Jaffa lay the city of Tel Aviv, established as a Zionist coastal settlement in 1909. The economies of the two cities were substantially intertwined, but over the course of the mandate Tel Aviv's own port facilities were developed. Its population – almost exclusively Jewish – roughly tripled between 1922 and 1931; by the latter year its population of 46,101 approached that of Jaffa.¹⁴²

Haifa, formerly part of the province of Beirut, had been included within the *sancak* of the city of Acre, located across Haifa's large bay. In the last decades of the nineteenth century Haifa grew to over-

shadow Acre in both commercial importance and population.¹⁴³ The city's population continued to grow during the mandatory period, almost doubling between 1922 and 1931. Its 1931 population of 50,403 included a Jewish community of nearly 16,000 and a slightly smaller Christian population.¹⁴⁴

The city of Nablus in the hilly interior north of Jerusalem stood in contrast to Jaffa and Haifa. For most of the nineteenth century it had been Palestine's main commercial and manufacturing centre,¹⁴⁵ but though it continued to grow in population and maintained considerable economic importance, its growth was nowhere near that of the coastal cities. In 1931, the city had 17,189 inhabitants – only slightly more than at the time of the 1922 census.¹⁴⁶ Almost no Jews lived there and there were fewer than 600 Christians among its citizens. Much less cosmopolitan than Jaffa, Haifa or even Jerusalem, it had a reputation for social and religious conservatism.¹⁴⁷ The city's trade, especially in its imported textiles, linked it to Damascus via Jaffa, Haifa and Beirut.¹⁴⁸ The political orientation of the city's *ayan* also tended to face Damascus as much as Jerusalem. As a former *sancak* capital within the province of Beirut, Nablus had not been subject to administration from Jerusalem until the coming of British rule. Thus, it is not surprising that, as we shall see, the city's nationalist leaders displayed a pronounced pan-Syrian nationalism mixed with an element of competitiveness with the Jerusalem politicians.

Palestine's Arab political leaders tended to be educated. Substantial numbers of them – though probably not most in the period before 1934 – had university degrees. Cairo's al-Azhar, with its curriculum in Islamic sciences, likely produced most of the non-law graduates. The number of Palestinians with degrees from secular or Christian universities was also substantial, though an Islamic education did not preclude study in secular or missionary institutions. A considerable number of the elite had degrees in secular law and the number certainly increased during the period under review. Somewhat fewer studied medicine, but the natural sciences, humanities and various social sciences were well represented. After al-Azhar, the American University of Beirut (AUB), which Presbyterian missionaries established in 1866, probably produced the most Palestinian graduates in the early years of the mandate. Others had studied in the Ottoman civil service school or military academy. A few had been educated at the Jesuit University in Beirut, and some at European universities,

including the Sorbonne and University of London. Among those without university degrees, it seems the majority of the political elite had been to Ottoman state secondary schools, missionary schools or a new variety of private Islamic school.¹⁴⁹ The political leaders also tended to be bilingual or multilingual. Turkish was the most commonly spoken second language, followed by English and French. Some learnt Hebrew and a few spoke Greek and Italian as well as Persian and other Islamic languages.¹⁵⁰

Although the Palestinian political elite was preponderantly Muslim, Christians were represented in the political institutions in disproportionately high numbers.¹⁵¹ Comprising about 11 per cent of the non-Jewish population in 1922, they mostly belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, but there were some Greek Catholics and Roman Catholics as well, though substantially fewer in number. The high representation of Christians in the institutions of leadership was because they tended to be much more urbanized, better educated and generally wealthier than their Muslim counterparts – all of which reflected their key roles in connecting Palestine with the larger Mediterranean world. Christians were generally more likely to align themselves with the Opposition than with the Majlisi faction, and tended to maintain closer relations with the British administration.¹⁵²

The leaders who formed the main mandatory political institutions and associations were also exclusively male. Some of them, however, participated in the discussions about changes in the role of women in public life and the family that were current among the Ottoman elite in the final years of the empire.¹⁵³ Kinship and extended family were important to political factions, but a shared family name was not necessarily a marker of alliance.

The gaps in culture, education, wealth and power that separated the elite from the rest of Palestinian Arabs were wide and deep. By contrast with the urbanized elites, 70 per cent of Palestinians did not live in cities or large towns.¹⁵⁴ In fact, Palestine had no urban centres that could compare in size with Damascus or Cairo, which is undoubtedly one reason for the later arrival of mass politics and popular nationalism in Palestine. The villages and small towns in which most Palestinians made their lives at the beginning of the mandate were generally not linked by telegraph, telephone or railway. Many were not even joined by roads suitable for wheeled vehicles.¹⁵⁵ Rural Palestinians engaged in agricultural production for both the market

and for their subsistence. Their access to city and town markets tended to be mediated by urban-based landlords and merchants who converted crops to cash and advanced credit to peasant producers, commonly in the form of seed. Peasants were almost universally indebted and, though some did accumulate sufficient capital to acquire land and livestock, others were completely landless and worked for a share of the produce. Even with the advent of British administration and the abolition of tax farming, by all accounts the level of taxation remained crushing.¹⁵⁶

As suggested above, the *millet* 'system' probably never functioned as comprehensively as the imperial elite in Istanbul had envisioned it would, especially in rural areas. This is one reason why it cannot be assumed that the primary political identities of rural Palestinian Arabs were expressed in religious terms. The idea of an Arab cultural and linguistic community, crossing confessional lines and carrying political significance certainly was not alien to the rural population. Palestinians in the hill areas around Nablus and Jerusalem, as in other parts of Greater Syria, had for centuries joined political factions that took their names from the pre-Islamic Arabian tribal confederations, the Qays and Yaman. The clans that joined these alliances did not typically do so on the basis of commonalities of lineage, and the adherents included townspeople, fellahin and Bedouin, as well as Muslims, Orthodox Christians and Catholics. In the hills around Jerusalem during the violent and unstable first half of the nineteenth century, Christians and Muslims allied in the same factions and Christian Qaysis fought Christian Yamanis, as was the case with Muslims in each faction. Rural notables still preserved the memories of these identities in the early 1970s when Miriam Hoexter conducted research on the topic.¹⁵⁷

Although such expressions of identity could in other contexts be reinterpreted as 'national', they did not at the beginning of the twentieth century constitute modern nationalism. More generally, at the time of the establishment of British administration in Palestine, the conditions that prevailed were not those that would lead either colonial administrators or the Zionist leadership to expect that they would face a coherent and organized national movement in Palestine. There is another factor – at least as important as any other – that delayed the advent of a broadly based discourse on collective political identity and popular political institutions. This was the level of des-

truction inflicted on Palestine and the rest of geographic Syria during the First World War when the civilian population suffered naval blockade, famine, hunger and disease. Perhaps as many as half a million people in Greater Syria died of starvation during the war.¹⁵⁸ The Ottoman government had conscripted almost all adult males into the army and marched them off to distant fronts where many were killed or maimed.¹⁵⁹ One might imagine that in the best of circumstances it would have taken a generation to return the country to its former state. In many respects, Palestine at the end of the war lay supine before the world's strongest imperial power and a determined nationalist settler movement.

Conclusions

Nationalism can be understood as the cultural response to institutional developments that are peculiar to the modern world and that are closely related to the mechanization of transport, the expansion of printing, the advent of telecommunications and the industrialization of war. They can be seen in the precisely bordered, centrally administered entities known as nation-states. The nation-state, because of its impersonal administrative power, is capable of intervening in the lives of its citizenry to a degree that was unknown in previous forms of the state. All modern states, because of their impersonal and invasive natures, seem to be in some measure alien to their citizenry. This sensation is intensified when the institutions of the state are culturally divorced from its subjects and citizens.

As the balance of power in Europe and the world economic system drew in the Ottoman Empire, it significantly expanded its impersonal administrative power. That centralizing enterprise required a cadre of bureaucrats, lawyers and military officers educated in European-style curricula. They were thus acculturated into an idea of history in which a nation moved progressively towards its self-realization. The culturally Turkish character of the new institutions was evident to Arab students, officials and military officers, and it was mainly they who set up the secret prewar and wartime Arab nationalist societies.

Although the prewar Arab nationalist associations were small and the Ottoman Administrative Decentralization Party did not become a mass movement, their members, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, were profoundly important in the expansion of nationalism as a basis of political association during the interwar period. In that

period, when demanding independence before a world community of nation-states meant demanding independence in the name of a nation, the first Arab nationalists undertook to transmit the idea of an Arab nation to the next generation of Palestinian Arabs. This is not to argue that, had the Ottoman Empire not been dismantled during the war, Arab nationalism would have inevitably become a mass-based separatist movement. Neither is it to claim that the seed of Arab nationalism germinated in the prewar period and, by its internal potential, grew to fruition after the war. Instead, the redeployment of Arab nationalist symbols, the establishment of new nationalist associations, and the infusion of the nationalist idiom into an emerging public sphere were strategies of political entrepreneurs faced with contingent events in the interwar era.

Clearly, despite the fact that the mandates were ostensibly intended to join a world community of independent nation-states, the British administration of the country did not intentionally encourage the development of Arab nationalism in Palestine. The sectarianism and methods of indirect rule that constituted important elements of British colonial control undid many of the policies and intentions of the Ottoman government, which had striven to advance direct rule and to diminish sectarianism.

We shall see in the next chapter that this policy entailed a contradiction. Even as the British officials pursued their wonted strategy of cultivating 'traditional' leaders as intermediaries, they also built a bureaucracy and court system, and recruited into them Palestinian Arabs as another variety of mediating indigenous elites. Not unlike Arab officials of the Ottoman state, educated young Palestinian Arabs who obtained or sought employment as civil servants were confronted with the culturally alien character of the state. The process of education and acculturation in the age of nationalism engendered a sense that the modern world was divided into nation-states and that the attainment of statehood was a normal and natural historical process. The reality of nations and their rights to statehood came to prevail as common sense. Thus, the government of Palestine confronted a contradiction deriving from the fact that acculturation into the administrative institutions 'inevitably brought what were increasingly thought of and written about as European "national histories" into the consciousness of the colonized – not merely through occasional obtuse festivities, but also through reading-rooms and classrooms'.¹⁶⁰

Chapter 2

The Nationalist Youth and Veteran Nationalists

In June 1928 the Palestinian Arab leadership held its seventh and final congress. It had been five years since the sixth, the rivalry between the Majlisi and Opposition factions having been so bitter as to prevent the convening of a representative gathering of Palestinian politicians. But in those five years important changes had taken place. Among them was the impression that the Zionist movement was not the threat it had earlier appeared to be. High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel, so closely identified with Zionism, had completed his term of office in 1925 and was replaced by Lord Plumer. Because of Plumer's military experience in India, Egypt and South Africa, and because of his previous governorship of Malta, he fitted the mould of a British colonial governor more closely than Samuel had done. His tenure in office was notable for his success in maintaining the peace of the country at minimal expense. Plumer retired from his service in Palestine in July 1928, and Sir John Chancellor – another experienced colonial governor and a former military officer who had served in India – became high commissioner.¹

That there had been no major demonstrations of violence between Arabs and Jews since the 1921 May Day riots was also partly due to the decline in Jewish immigration after the first postwar wave – the Third 'Aliyah – subsided in 1923. The Fourth 'Aliyah, beginning in 1924, brought a group of immigrants composed largely of middle-class Poles who brought with them investment capital that fuelled a brief economic expansion. By the second half of 1926, however, an economic downturn had set in and the number of Jews leaving the country exceeded the number entering. Immigrants experienced the unemployment and economic hardships that seemed to demonstrate the inability of the Yishuv's institutions to support its population.

Although a rapid economic recovery began in 1928, the number of immigrants did not greatly increase.² Zionism's apparent weakness must have removed any sense of urgency from the Palestinian elite, for its leaders had attempted no nationalist mobilization since the last Palestinian Arab congress. The exception, as we shall see in the next chapter, was the support Palestinians gave the Syrians in their revolt against the French between 1925 and 1927, which demonstrated that events across the recently drawn border still affected Palestinians deeply. Aside from this, factional competition took precedence over any struggle for independence.

The seemingly diminished threat from Zionist colonization made it easier for Palestinian leaders to work out a more accommodating relationship with the British administration. Consequently, the seventh congress marked a renewed effort to establish a unified representative body of Palestinian Arabs across the factional divide. With 277 delegates, it was the largest of the congresses and produced an ungainly 48-member Arab Executive as its permanent body. Consonant with the Palestinian leaders' increased willingness to reap the benefits of cooperating with the government, the delegates expressed renewed acceptance of the idea of a legislative council. In this spirit, they passed a resolution calling for parliamentary government in the country on the model of neighbouring Arab countries that were trying to come to terms with colonial rule. Although a small faction of generally younger representatives introduced a resolution calling for the independence of Palestine within Arab unity, their proposal garnered no real support among the delegates. Thus, the congress was in no way marked by any effort to produce a programme leading to independence or a serious challenge to the Zionist movement.³

Haim Kalvarisky, an official of the Jewish Agency who had long maintained contacts with Palestinian politicians, noted the 'moderate' tone of the congress, but asserted that it also indicated 'the loss of influence of the feudal families over the masses' and the 'gradually increasing influence of the Arab "intelligentsia".' He added, 'The cultured youth are versed in politics, most of them extremists and chauvinists, and it is more difficult to come to terms with them.'⁴

In this chapter I consider these 'extremists and chauvinists' among the 'cultured youth' and their challenge to the wider leadership. The coalescence of a nationalist youth movement was in many ways a continuation and a renewal of processes under way in the prewar

period. Nationalism strengthened among the educated youth and by 1930 activists had begun to attempt to appropriate existing institutions and to make them centres of resistance to the mandate. The activists also began their efforts to create new institutions that were explicitly nationalist and that were intended to protest against the policies of the mandatory government. These efforts included calls for the organization of an Arab nationalist party that could demand independence for the country.

The New Generation in Palestine⁵

The British represented the Palestine administration as the basis for the government of a future independent state, though they maintained a useful ambiguity about when and under what circumstances independence would come. Despite their inclination to preserve the administrative and legal status quo as far as possible, British officials created a new bureaucracy that could collect more taxes, register land ownership and transfers, conduct censuses, register births and deaths, record immigration and emigration, and assess commercial and agricultural activity. They also instituted a Palestinian currency tied to the pound sterling, expanded the secular court system and legislated new laws.⁶ Norman Bentwich, the first attorney general of the Palestine government, described how the administration left Ottoman civil law largely unchanged but replaced Ottoman criminal and commercial law with ordinances based on British law. He added, 'There is then a steady tendency to *anglicize* the law, save for those transactions which affect the agricultural population.'⁷

Bentwich's observation that the law had not simply been modernized or reformed, but anglicized, points to the degree to which an administrative system must carry cultural characteristics, the most essential of them being human language. It was not only the law that was anglicized, but also the whole of the government and the locally recruited manpower that staffed much of it. Increasingly since the 1860s, the urban notables of Greater Syria had aspired to combine activities in land ownership and commerce with careers in the civil service. This did not cease with the British occupation. The Istiqlalist 'Izzat Darwazah later recalled how the Palestine administration employed young men from notable families, making them effectively hostages (*raha'in*) to gain the compliance of the notable leadership, a practice confirmed by the research of later historians.⁸ As the Pales-

tine government elaborated its functions, it drew increasingly on the local Palestinian population – Jewish and Arab – to fill clerical, technical and administrative positions. These lower-level administrators and officials acted as the bilingual intermediaries between the government and the populace. The junior grade civil service, which contained only a small minority of British officials, grew from around 3000 employees in 1929 to over 5000 in 1935, and to more than 10,000 in 1947.⁹

In much the same manner in which Arab civil servants and military officers adopted Ottoman ways and Turkish language as part of the culture and ethos of a bureaucratic elite, so also did bilingual Arab employees of the mandatory government absorb British culture and the English language. This took place in the civil servants' clubs where British, Arab and Jewish government employees socialized in English, and also in the associations sponsored by the Palestine government, such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) to which Christian and Muslim civil servants felt obliged to belong.¹⁰ The Baden-Powellist scouting association likewise served this function. Conceived originally for British boys as an institution 'fortifying the wall of empire', the government promoted it in Palestine to organize the rising generation of educated Arab youth around British civic values.¹¹ The high commissioner bore the honorary title of Supreme President of Scouting in Palestine, while the director of education served as both president of the YMCA and representative of the Baden-Powell scouting organization.¹² The Department of Education, more than any other institution, was responsible for promoting British culture among the rising Arab elites.

The British educators in Palestine, influenced by their experiences in Egypt, Sudan and India, focused on creating a class of civil servants rather than on achieving universal literacy and spreading practical skills.¹³ The director of education in Palestine, Humphrey Bowman, was another official who had gained his initial experience in colonial education in Egypt towards the end of Cromer's administration. There he had worked under the British adviser to the Egyptian ministry of education, Douglas Dunlop. Bowman next served as director of education in Sudan and then in Iraq before taking up his assignment in Palestine.¹⁴ He brought with him from Egypt Cromer's dread of education producing the 'political charlatan' possessed of 'perfidious eloquence and political quackery'.¹⁵ It was Bowman's belief that an

overly literary education for Palestinian Arabs could produce in Palestine, as he felt it had in Egypt, 'the Frankenstein monster raised by [Sa'd] Zaghluld, where the whole system of Government was undermined by students' demonstrations'.¹⁶ Bowman recalled with satisfaction Lord Kitchener's policy for the Sudan, which was designed 'to avoid the evils consequent upon any attempt to force upon a semi-oriental and half-civilised people an elaborate system of education suited only to a highly civilised Western nation'.¹⁷

Consonant with British officialdom's affinity for an idealized, stable rural order and its suspicion of the urban, educated colonial subject, Bowman had hoped for a large-scale education programme in Palestine that would provide elemental Arabic literacy, practical agricultural and domestic skills, and handicrafts. He saw this as the best means of preventing the peasants from moving to cities where they fall under the influence of 'agitators'.¹⁸ But the Palestine administration, like that of Egypt and India, was characterized by a marked unwillingness to invest in the education of the population. Bowman's assessment of the reasons for this was not unlike that of Arab nationalist critics of the government. He observed, 'The money we were told, was required for defence; and we saw, as the years went by, many thousands of pounds earmarked for school development transferred elsewhere for the increase of police or military services'.¹⁹ Consequently, the educational programme in Palestine resembled that envisioned by Macaulay for India and it was largely confined to producing junior officials. As the Palestine civil administration expanded in the 1920s and 1930s, nationalists in Palestine only had to look to Egypt to see how British cultural domination produced an anglophile class of civil servants on which the British based their control. Nationalists in Palestine acknowledged the application of the Egyptian model in Palestine.²⁰

As A. L. Tibawi points out, during the two-and-a-half years of military administration in Palestine – an administration that was temporary and *ad hoc* – an average of 75 village schools were opened a year. This changed with the coming of civil administration and the establishment of the mandate, which was so auspiciously charged with developing Palestine for eventual self-government. After two years of civil administration, school openings slowed, and over the course of another three years, only four more schools were opened. From that point, in 1925, there was actually a small, cumulative

decline in the number of government Arab schools until 1933, when the government again began building them, albeit at a slower rate than during the military administration.²¹

Although sporadic and concentrated in the first years of British administration, the overall increase in the number of schools was one of the outstanding developments of the period between the beginning of the First World War and the mid-1930s. Between the 1914/15 and 1934/5 academic years, the number of government-operated Arab schools increased from 98 to 350, or almost 360 per cent.²² Private Christian schools, reflecting primarily the longstanding interests of foreign missionaries and consuls, numbered 139 in 1921 and another 40 had been added by 1935.²³ Most students in Palestine who pursued their studies beyond high school went to AUB, and some attended the Government Arab College, Palestine's teacher-training college.

Parallel to this increase in the expansion of the government Arab and private Christian schools, there was an even more dramatic increase in private Islamic and Arab schools. From 42 schools in 1921, the number of these schools reached 190 in 1935, amounting to a 452 per cent increase. Some 53 schools, or 28 per cent of the 1935 total, were added in the years between 1931 and 1935.²⁴ In this period nationalist youth organizations became a distinct force in Palestinian political life. The growth in the number of pupils enrolled in private Islamic schools was proportionally even greater than the growth in the number of those schools, increasing from 2287 students to 11,705. Yet, these schools still gave instruction to a relatively small proportion of all Arab students. In 1935, there were 36,005 students enrolled in government Arab schools and 16,636 in the private Christian schools.²⁵ Thus, the private Arab-Islamic schools accounted for only a third as many students as government schools in 1935, and Palestinian education continued to be dominated by foreign institutions.

The expansion of private Arab schools was not a new development of the mandatory period but rather the continuation of a trend that had its beginnings in Greater Syria in the late Ottoman period. Parents who desired an education for their children that prepared them for a career in commerce, law or the Ottoman bureaucracy or military had frequently resorted to sending their children to missionary institutions where Islamic and Arab culture were ignored when not denigrated. In response, civic groups established private

Islamic schools, numbering around 151 in the *wilayat* of Beirut in 1915.²⁶ The Islamic College (al-Kulliyah al-Islamiyah) in Beirut was an outstanding example of a locally organized school that offered modern pedagogic methods in sciences and European languages alongside a curriculum in Islamic studies. Founded in 1895 by an al-Azhar graduate, Shaykh Ahmad ‘Abbas, it was characterized by contemporaries as one of the cradles of Arab nationalism.²⁷ The Islamic College’s graduates and teachers included the Palestinian nationalist youth organizer Darwish Miqdadi and the Lebanese Istiqlalist Fu‘ad Salim; the early Arab nationalists Riyad al-Sulh and ‘Abd al-Ghani al-‘Urayisi had served on its board of directors.²⁸ Fahmi al-‘Abbushi was a student there during the First World War as the Arab movement emerged and was suppressed in Beirut.²⁹ Al-‘Abbushi was later a leader of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine.

In Palestine, al-Najah School (Madrasat al-Najah al-Wataniyah) of Nablus represented the same variety of institution. In fact, ‘Izzat Darwazah, the school’s first director, visited the Islamic College during the First World War while ‘Abbushi was a student there. He spoke to Shaykh ‘Abbas about establishing a similar school in Nablus and received assurance of help in the development of curricula and textbooks.³⁰ At the time of his visit, Darwazah was involved in Arab nationalist activities. A group associated with the Nablus branch of the Arab Club, one of the nationalist organizations formed at the time of Faysal’s Damascus government, established al-Najah in 1918.³¹ The school’s administration claimed to offer accepted preparation for AUB, the American University in Cairo and the Syrian University in Damascus, advertising that it was therefore unnecessary for parents to send their sons to foreign schools.³² By 1926, there were indications in the press that the school’s faculty and directorate were promoting an explicitly nationalist orientation. At the ceremony graduating 16 students that year, students sang the song ‘We Are the Youth of the Arabs’.³³ The existence of nationalist anthems seems to have been a new development, as a columnist for *al-Yarmuk* observed at the time.³⁴ In the early 1930s the press coverage of youth activities commonly referred to the singing of these anthems.

In August 1931 ‘Izzat Darwazah stepped down from the directorate of al-Najah to pass it on to Jalal Zurayq. Zurayq, who was 30 years old at the time of his appointment, had graduated from AUB and had recently finished a period of service in the Iraqi school system. Iraq’s

minister of education, Sati^c al-Husri, later recognized as the most influential theorist of pan-Arab nationalism and also a former member of the Istiqlal Party in Damascus, had developed Iraq's education system as an institution for the propagation of nationalist ideals. Zurayq was also the author of several textbooks in Arabic on science and mathematics that were used in the schools of Syria and Palestine.³⁵ As director of the Najah School, he was supportive of his teachers who promoted nationalism and pro-independence activities among their students.³⁶ In addition to 'Izzat Darwazah, several of the most visible members of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine were al-Najah alumni or faculty members. One of the youngest of the party's members, Hashim al-Sabi^c, graduated from al-Najah before going on to his own career in teaching, youth organization and journalism. He later attributed his strong nationalist feelings to Darwazah and other teachers at the school.³⁷ Akram Zu'aytir and Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah (a younger brother of 'Izzat Darwazah) taught there during the period of their activity in the Istiqlal Party. Mamduh al-Sukhn, a science teacher and AUB graduate, was also a scout leader for the school and director of the athletic club, which served later as the Istiqlal Party's headquarters in the city.³⁸

It is not difficult to identify similar developments in Haifa, which became a second stronghold of the Istiqlal Party. A number of Istiqlalists and other Syrian nationalists took refuge in Haifa after the expulsion of Faysal's government from Damascus. They concentrated in the Haifa Islamic Society and worked closely with the Palestinian Istiqlalists. They taught in the Islamic Society's schools, in which a *salafi* intellectual orientation prevailed.³⁹ Several also worked for the Islamic Society's newspaper, *al-Yarmuk*, which was pro-Majlisi, anti-mandate, and generally favourable to pan-Syrian and pan-Arab nationalism.⁴⁰ Notable among this group was Shaykh Kamil al-Qassab who had remained close to 'Izzat Darwazah since the time of their activities together in Damascus.⁴¹ He worked as director of the Islamic Society's school and travelled periodically to the Hijaz where he served as an adviser on education to Ibn Sa'ud.⁴² Al-Qassab was born in Damascus to a lower middle-class family and took his advanced education at al-Azhar. There he studied with Muhammad 'Abduh. After returning to Damascus, he founded the Ottoman School (*al-Madrasah al-Uthmaniyyah*), which was typical of the new style of Islamic school in its teaching of secular curricula alongside Islamic

sciences. He joined al-Fatat in 1913. During the period of Faysal's government, he was a member of the Istiqlal Party and was one of the most important pro-independence journalists and popular organizers in Damascus.⁴³

Hani Abu Muslih, a Lebanese Druze and another former member of Istiqlal in Damascus, edited *al-Yarmuk* and also taught in one of the Islamic Society's schools.⁴⁴ He had been fired from his post in a Palestine government school for encouraging his students to strike on the occasion of Lord Balfour's 1925 visit to Palestine.⁴⁵ Abu Muslih's colleague at Haifa's Islamic School, Muhammad 'Ali Salih, shared a similar background. He had served as the editor of the paper *al-Jazirah* in Amman until forced out of Transjordan because of his opposition to the mandate. After teaching at the Islamic School, he opened the Istiqlal School (not officially affiliated with the party) in Haifa in 1931.⁴⁶ He was later a member of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine. Among this circle, Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam gained the greatest fame, losing his life in an attempt at organized armed rebellion in Palestine in 1935. He also taught in the Islamic Society schools. In 1933, the Jaffa newspaper *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* reported that there were more than ten private Islamic schools in Haifa, serving about 1500 Arab Muslim students. These included those established by the Islamic Society in addition to others.⁴⁷

Arab Nationalist History

Some members of the Haifa group appreciated 'Izzat Darwazah's efforts at al-Najah. In 1927 Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, a prominent merchant, a leader of the Haifa Islamic Society and later a member of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine, invited Darwazah to his home to speak to a group of students and notables on nationalist (*qawmiyah*) and patriotic (*wataniyah*) education.⁴⁸ This was in recognition of the fact that Darwazah's contribution to the spread of nationalist sentiments extended beyond his managerial work at al-Najah. In addition to directing the school, Darwazah wrote Arab and Islamic history textbooks. There is no way of knowing with certainty how many private Muslim schools in Palestine adopted these books – or even how many teachers in government schools used them.⁴⁹ But it is hard to imagine that they were not influential, especially given that Darwazah's protégés took teaching positions at al-Najah and other Palestinian institutions. The textbooks were significant not only for their effect

on the students who read them but also because they expressed thoughts that were current in classrooms, coffee houses and salons possibly well before such ideas had been recorded in print elsewhere.

The Ottoman state's centralizing policies had deeply affected Darwazah's life and career. Born in 1887 into a middle-class merchant family in Nablus, he studied in the city's government primary and preparatory schools, which were staffed by Turkish and Arab teachers. His family's finances did not permit him to go on to the empire's advanced institutions, but his proficiency in Turkish and his father's connections gained him employment as a telegrapher in the Ottoman Bureau of Telegraph and Mail. He then became closely involved with the institutions and technology that produce the sense of simultaneity that underpins the nationalist worldview.⁵⁰ He also participated in the political and cultural developments of the late Ottoman period. Shortly after the 1908 revolution, he joined the CUP, but left because of what he saw as a Turkish nationalist tendency within the association. He actively supported the Reform Society in Beirut and helped organize the Nablus branch of the Decentralization Party. While serving with the Ottoman forces in Sinai in 1916, he joined al-Fatat.⁵¹ He participated in the Syrian Congress in Damascus in 1919, and remained there working for the Arab government until 1920.

As a nationalist and a product of the Ottoman institutions that advanced a view of history as a progression towards modernity, he sought to affirm the contemporary Arab nation by grounding it in the achievements of the distant past. He also acknowledged the influence in Nablus of Jurji Zaydan's historical writing.⁵² Just as importantly, he wrote his texts to thwart the development of a British monopoly on the representation of Arab history. Even when writing in the mid-1950s about one of the British textbooks, Darwazah expressed an anger that had not cooled in the 20-year interim.⁵³ The book in question, *The New Age History Reader III*, dealt with, among other topics, the Crusades. When Muhibb al-Din al-Khatib's paper *al-Fath* published quotations from the section in 1932, the book had been in use in Palestine for eight years. In addition to referring to the Muslim rulers of Palestine as 'False believers' and 'the Infidel', the last lesson indicated the British conception of their role in Palestine: 'Before I close this lesson, let me remind you that what the later Crusades failed to do our Army did during the Great War. In the year 1917 we

overcame the Turks, conquered the Holy Land, and set up the Union Jack on the Wall of Jerusalem.⁵⁴

It is no surprise that al-Khatib took on the issue of British representations of history in Palestine. He was a prewar nationalist, an associate of Rashid Rida, and a former Istiqlalist who edited King Faysal's official newspaper, *al-Asimah*. His Salafi Press in Cairo also published several of Darwazah's textbooks.⁵⁵ In fact, al-Khatib wrote an Arab nationalist history book tracing the origins of the Arab nation back to the early Semitic empires. In this he was influenced by the Semitic wave theory the US scholar Henry Breasted advanced⁵⁶ in his book *Ancient Times*, in which he ascribed the source of the civilizations of antiquity to periodic migrations from the Arabian Peninsula over the course of history. The book was translated into Arabic in 1926 and by 1936 it had become the standard text for the Palestine Board of Higher Studies matriculation examination.⁵⁷ The Istiqlalist circle identified with this idea to a striking extent. Al-Khatib's colleague in the Istiqlal Party in Damascus, Asa'd Dagher, produced one of the earliest examples of this style of history. Entitled *Hadarat al-'Arab* (The civilization of the Arabs), his book was published in 1918 and dedicated to King Faysal. It portrayed the first civilizations as Arab, and the Babylonian King Hammurabi as an Arab king.⁵⁸

These depictions of Arab history suggest the sort of conceptual changes taking place in the private Arab schools in Palestine. In 1924 Darwazah's first textbook, *Ta'rikh al-'arab wa-l-islam* (The history of the Arabs and Islam) was published by the Salafi Press. Darwazah wrote it because of his dissatisfaction with other texts and the need to instil a nationalist spirit in the youth. Darwazah acknowledged that, in writing it, he consulted Sati' al-Husri.⁵⁹ In 1934, the Iraqi Ministry of Education adopted it as an official primary school textbook.⁶⁰ The book did not rely on the Semitic wave theory, but neither was it contradictory to it. In this work, Darwazah covered the period of the ancient empires through the Ayyubid period.⁶¹ He did not directly link these events to contemporary national movements or nation states. Darwazah treated Arab history more comprehensively in his *Durus al-ta'rikh al-'arabi min aqdam al-azminah ila al'an* (Lessons in Arab history from earliest times to the present).⁶² The first edition also did not rely on the Semitic wave theory, but later chapters dealt with the beginnings of Arab nationalism and tensions between Turks and Arabs during the second Ottoman constitutional period.

Even more indicative of the propensity to see the Arabs as a nation pre-existing Islam and requiring contemporary political expression was Darwazah's textbook on ancient history, entitled *Durus al-ta'rikh al-qadim* (Lessons in ancient history).⁶³ Basing his explanation on Breasted's Semitic wave theory as explicated in al-Khatib's book, Darwazah explained why the Palestinians were ethnically tied to the other Arab peoples. In his view, ancient Semitic peoples were Arabs, having migrated from the Arabian Peninsula, in some cases thousands of years before Islam.⁶⁴ After these people left the Arabian Peninsula they gradually changed in language and customs, and took on new names. In Iraq they became Akkadians, Amorites, Assyrians and Chaldeans; in Syria, Phoenicians and Aramaeans; in Palestine, Hebrews and Canaanites; in Egypt, Copts and Bedouin; and in Ethiopia, Ethiopians. Those who remained in the peninsula became known as Arabs.⁶⁵ Thus, the most ancient bonds tied Palestinians to the Arabs of other countries.

The importance of this must be seen also from a broader perspective. In their use of the Semitic wave theory, Darwazah, Daghir and al-Khatib effectively asserted that Arabs founded the first civilizations. The early Islamic conquests were thus the most precious and recent link in a long chain of civilizing movements originating in the Arabian Peninsula. This claim was a necessary aspect of the demand for independence that defined them as Istiqlalists. In asserting a long-standing existence of Arab civilization, the nationalist authors were denying the mandatory powers their civilizing role; by demonstrating the historical reality of the Arab nation, the authors were asserting its place in the system of mutually recognized independent nation-states that was supposed to characterize the modern world. In other words, they argued for independence under the same terms as the imperial powers justified their control over the mandated regions.

The British and Palestinian Arab nationalists' ultimately irreconcilable intentions were manifested not only in Arab versus British versions of Arab history, nor only in the establishment of schools that promoted Arab and Islamic culture over British culture. The conflicts were also being played out in the Palestinian associations that Arab civil servants joined alongside Arab nationalist activists. This was most clearly evident in the YMMAs (Young Men's Muslim Associations or *Jam'iyat al-Shubban al-Muslimin*).

The Beginning of the YMMAs in Palestine

The YMMA was, in origin, an Egyptian organization chartered in 1926 and intended to preserve Islamic values and learning among young Muslim men. It was also a conscious response to the YMCA, which was frequently associated with British colonial administrations and attracted educated local youth.⁶⁶ As indicated earlier, the Palestine YMCA enjoyed the mandatory government's support and its president was Humphrey Bowman. Branches in Palestine were also affiliated with the world YMCA. Based in the United States and under the leadership of John R. Mott, the organization had in recent years set its sights on the Christianization of the Islamic world. Mott saw in the developments of the postwar period an opportunity for this because 'possibly as many as seven out of every eight Moslems in the world are living under the flag of one or another Christian nation'.⁶⁷ The world YMCA thus organized the World Missionary Conference in Palestine on the Mount of Olives during the week of Easter 1928. Palestinian Muslims correctly viewed this as an organizational step towards the re-Christianization of the Holy Land.⁶⁸

Palestinians responded by convening the Congress of Islamic Clubs in Jaffa in April 1928, during which it was decided that Palestine would form a network of YMMAs to preserve Islamic culture in the face of intense Christian and European cultural penetration.⁶⁹ The congress adopted a charter much like that of the Egyptian YMMA. In addition to general organizational considerations and goals, the charter stated, 'This society does not engage in politics. ... The society does not involve itself in factional disputes and no member is permitted to use it for that.' As events proved over the course of the next year, the organizers intended this provision not only to prevent factional rivalries from wrecking the associations, but also to free civil servants from any concern that membership of the associations could involve them in anti-government activities.⁷⁰ Within six months Palestinians had organized YMMAs in at least ten Palestinian towns, a development that overlapped the convening of the seventh Palestinian Arab Congress in June.⁷¹

Culturally, the YMMAs expressed *salafi* Islamic and Arab nationalist sensibilities, then current among educated Muslims and reflected in the speeches 'Ajaj Nuwayhid made to YMMA branches during the winter of 1928/9. A former member of the Istiqlal Party in Damascus and later a founder of the revived party in Palestine, Lebanese-born

Nuwayhid was a committed Arab nationalist. He saw in nationalism no threat to Islam, but instead feared that the Arab nation and Arab culture could not endure without Islam. In his lectures he criticized the secularizing policies of the governments of Turkey, Iran and Afghanistan, and exalted the example of the Iranian-born *salafi* intellectual Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1838–97) for his defence of Islamic culture against Western cultural encroachment.⁷²

A strong Arab nationalist strand within the YMMAs was evident in that future members of Istiqlal – some of them prewar nationalists – were prominent in organizing the association's branches in Palestine and served in their leadership in cities that later became centres of the Istiqlal Party. These included the Nablus, Jaffa, Haifa and Gaza branches.⁷³ The Haifa YMMA elected a founding committee that included Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, Ramzi 'Amir and Shaykh 'Izz al-Din Qassam, all later members or close associates of the party.⁷⁴ Among the 100 founding members of the Nablus YMMA were its first president, 'Izzat Darwazah, then director of al-Najah, and his brother Muhammad 'Ali, another Istiqlalist. Mustafa al-Dabbagh, who served as the assistant inspector of schools and was thus a government employee, was also an officer of the Nablus YMMA. Most significantly, the press reported that 'among [the members] were a large number of school teachers and government civil servants'.⁷⁵

The Gaza branch, organized in the same period, was notable because the activists who later formed the Istiqlal Party's branch in the city predominated in its leadership.⁷⁶ Within two years, the branch, with Hamdi al-Husayni – later an Istiqlalist leader – as president, had become a centre of anti-mandate sentiment. By mid-November 1928 al-Husayni was also holding a leadership position in the Jaffa YMMA.⁷⁷

The presence of al-Husayni in the leadership of these two associations suggested the potential for conflict between the civil servants and anti-mandate youth, for it also evinced the wide spectrum of political and cultural orientations encompassed within the YMMAs. Al-Husayni was the son of a *qadi* who had worked in high positions in the Shaykh al-Islam administration before the war. His extended family (not related to the Jerusalem al-Husaynis) was one of the most influential in Gaza. The Ottoman government exiled the younger al-Husayni to Anatolia during the war, but while still a teenager he returned to Palestine to join Britain's Arab allies in the last months of

fighting. Afterwards, he worked as a government schoolteacher until his anti-mandate agitation among his students cut his career short in 1925.⁷⁸ As the YMMAs were being organized, he worked as a journalist, editing the Jaffa paper *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*. Although *al-Sirat*'s owner was affiliated with the Opposition, al-Husayni was known for his unequivocal nationalism and his criticism of partisan Palestinian politics.⁷⁹ The previous year he had published a statement outlining a programme of non-cooperation to be directed at the mandatory government in order to attain independence for Palestine and recommending the formation of an Arab alliance as the basis of Arab unity.⁸⁰ Both these suggestions anticipated the programme of the Istiqlal Party five years later.

It was controversial that al-Husayni joined the League to Combat Imperialism at this time.⁸¹ This Comintern-sponsored Berlin-based league was an organization intended to support nationalist and anti-colonial movements around the world.⁸² In Palestine, al-Husayni maintained contacts with the largely Jewish Palestine Communist Party, which sought to add Arabs to its membership and to develop an alliance with any leftist tendency within the Arab national movement.⁸³ At the seventh Palestinian Arab Congress al-Husayni unsuccessfully called to reject the mandate, declare Palestinian independence within Arab unity and form an Arab alliance.⁸⁴ Aged 28 at the time of the congress, he was the most visible of the young nationalists there and he made a strong impression on the Jewish Agency's Haim Kalvarisky. Subsequent public statements by al-Husayni returned to the theme that the Arab Executive elected at this congress was not an authentic leadership because the congress, in its unwillingness to demand complete independence, had betrayed the principles of the people.⁸⁵ He later characterized his position there as 'Representative of the Left Wing of the Seventh Palestinian Arab Congress', the title he was given in a correspondence from the League to Combat Imperialism.⁸⁶

The nationalist and reformist tendency in the YMMAs gained a mouthpiece through the newspaper *Sawt al-haqq*. Hamdi al-Husayni had formerly edited the paper in Jaffa and Fawzi al-Dajani, a fellow member of the Gaza YMMA, took up the paper's concession and reopened it in Gaza in December 1928.⁸⁷ The content and concerns of *Sawt al-haqq* reflected the tendency al-Husayni represented and mirrored the orientation of the League to Combat Imperialism.

Typical features dealt with labour organization, prison reform, peasant concerns, the veiling of women and youth organization.⁸⁸ Significantly, at a time when Arab–Jewish rivalry over the control of the Western Wall (*al-Buraq*) in the Old City of Jerusalem was becoming intense, *Sawt al-haqq* gave the issue little attention. It did publish announcements from the Committee for the Defence of al-Buraq, and it covered an Islamic Congress held for the site's protection. Hamdi al-Husayni was a secretary at the congress.⁸⁹ Yet, the paper in no way made the issue its own. In fact, a front-page editorial in 1928 addressed to the new high commissioner, John Chancellor, enumerated the most pressing concerns of the country and did not mention the Western Wall. The urgent issues were the Balfour Declaration, the lack of representative government, oppressive taxation, lack of protection for local industry, insufficient schools and a poor police force.⁹⁰

Al-Husayni and his immediate associates raised strong concerns about Palestinian Arab workers among some members of the YMMAs. These associates included Musa al-Kayyali, a fellow journalist who published a lead article in *Sawt al-haqq* suggesting that the YMMAs of Palestine gather to decide how to organize Arab workers on the model of the Zionist workers.⁹¹ Four months earlier Hani Abu Muslih had made the same proposal at the seventh Palestinian Arab Congress only to see his idea summarily dismissed.⁹² But within the YMMAs, the suggestion went down well and the Jaffa branch sent out a call to all the other branches for a meeting to discuss it. The Haifa branch had already begun this type of organization, charging Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim with registering labourers and tradesmen to connect them with employers in anticipated projects, especially the government's port expansion scheme in the city.⁹³ By late September 1928, the association claimed to have registered about 2000 workers, but seems not to have tied its efforts to the Palestine Arab Workers' Society (PAWS), established among railway workers in the city three years earlier.⁹⁴ The Gaza YMMA also offered to provide the same service as a workers' society and opened registration for night courses in reading.⁹⁵

In November 1928 the first YMMA congress passed a resolution that mandated the branches to 'organize unions of Muslim workers to help the Muslim worker to preserve his existence and rights and to advance his standard of living'. The resolution added, 'There is not the least contradiction between the idea of organization of the Mus-

lim worker and the joining of his unions and efforts with the Christian worker who is tied to him by the sacred bonds of race.⁹⁶ This, significantly, was one point in the resolutions that carried overtones of Arab nationalism. Roughly a year later, a Jaffa paper reported that a group of Christians had joined the Nablus YMMA.⁹⁷

The congress also resolved to organize athletic teams and games, and to manage the Muslim scout troops affiliated to the Beirut Muslim scouting organization. With these resolutions, the YMMAs began to compete with what was then a British-dominated form of association, closely affiliated with the mandatory administration.⁹⁸ The anti-mandate sentiments became more pronounced over the course of the year.

Hamdi al-Husayni and the League to Combat Imperialism

In the summer of 1928, the League to Combat Imperialism invited Hamdi al-Husayni to Cologne, Germany, for a meeting the next January to help organize the league's second world congress. There he accepted the office of secretary for all the Arab lands for one year.⁹⁹ Soon after, the league scheduled its congress for July 1929, adding an anti-imperialist youth congress to the agenda and promising to use the occasion to prepare for an Arab congress.¹⁰⁰ Although the Arab press in Palestine did not detail al-Husayni travels after he left Cologne, he in fact travelled to Moscow and met Comintern leaders and Joseph Stalin.¹⁰¹ On his return to Palestine in March, the mandatory authorities searched his belongings and confiscated his notes, books and the addresses of his contacts in Germany. They placed him under intense surveillance.¹⁰²

It was then no secret in Palestine that anti-imperialist activists, the most visible of them being Hamdi al-Husayni, were using youth associations to organize resistance to the mandate and to pursue a pro-labour reformist agenda. It was less apparent that Hamdi al-Husayni met regularly during 1929 in the home of the Palestinian communist activist Najati Sidqi and his Ukrainian-born wife to plan a programme of anti-mandate activity. Sidqi coordinated at the same time with Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam and a group of workers in Haifa.¹⁰³ These activities made no one more uncomfortable than the civil servants who formed a substantial part of the YMMAs' membership and whose careers depended on their relationships with the mandatory government. The tensions were clear within the Jaffa YMMA.

The Jaffa branch had formerly been known as the Islamic Youth Society, which had existed in the Manshiyah neighbourhood since 1924.¹⁰⁴ Manshiyah was a working-class district and, as the largest and poorest of Jaffa's neighbourhoods, was home to many previously rural workers who now joined the city's rapidly growing population.¹⁰⁵ Since the society's conversion into a YMMA, it was apparent that there were potential divisions within the association along class lines. According to a press article, it contained youths who were 'attracted to the European tendency' as well as 'the class of common people, walking in utter darkness'. The society invited lecturers to address the first group and set up a free night school for the second.¹⁰⁶

The association also elected Hamdi al-Husayni to its board of directors two months before his January 1929 trip to the League to Combat Imperialism meeting. By February two separate societies existed in Jaffa because of what was described as a factional dispute within the Jaffa YMMA.¹⁰⁷ Rivalry between the Majlisi and Opposition factions no doubt played a part in the schism, but the most important reason for the split appears to have been the struggle between anti-mandate nationalists and civil servants over the YMMA's policy. This became clear at the second YMMA congress on 2 and 3 May 1929, which the Jaffa YMMA hosted at the Manshiyah building. During the congress, al-Husayni proposed abolishing the second article of the association's charter, which, like the charter of the parent association in Cairo, declared that the YMMA did not become involved in politics. His proposal provoked a furious debate, the representatives of Jerusalem and Acre opposing the change vehemently and citing the trouble this could cause with the government.¹⁰⁸

Immediately following the congress, the Jaffa Greater YMMA, located in a different part of the city, issued a statement that it had absorbed the Manshiyah branch and had changed several articles of the latter's charter. The statement cryptically explained that the Manshiyah branch was primarily concerned with organizing unions for workers but that these activities were irreconcilable with YMMA principles. More pointedly, it went on to say that 'it was impossible for an educated youth and *especially a civil servant* to belong to this society because of this difference in principles and goals'.¹⁰⁹ Clearly, the labour-oriented reformist programme that al-Husayni and his associates had given the Manshiyah association was not of interest to some within the YMMA structure. Al-Husayni's connections with the

Communist Party and his hostility towards civil servants could only have made the latter group fearful of the consequences of their membership in the association for their relations with the Palestine government.

Two months after the congress of YMMAs in Jaffa, the League to Combat Imperialism held its scheduled world congress, at which it also convened what the British press referred to as a 'juvenile anti-Imperialist Congress'.¹¹⁰ Although the British authorities prevented Hamdi al-Husayni attending, he directed his efforts toward a similar activity in Palestine.¹¹¹

The First Arab Students Congress

The nationalist youth harboured an undercurrent of resentment towards the older leadership and in August an article in *al-Sirat al-mustqim* asserted that the older leadership was stifling any trend in the YMMAs towards resistance. The pseudonymously signed piece titled 'Troublemakers and Extremism' bitterly accused older political leaders of slandering young nationalists who opposed the mandate.¹¹²

This attitude came to the fore at the first Arab students' congress in Jaffa on 12 August 1929. Ibrahim al-Shanti, president of the Students' Educational Club (*Nadi al-Talabah al-Tahdhibi*) in Jaffa, and a group of Palestinian students at AUB had begun to plan the congress at the end of June.¹¹³ At the time, al-Shanti, a 19-year-old native of Jaffa, was a student at AUB and a member of the Arab cultural student group, the Firmest Bond (*al-Urwah al-Wuthqa*). After his graduation in 1932, he returned to Palestine and became a leader of the Istiqlal Party and worked on the pan-Arab newspaper *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* with the Syrian Istiqlalist Sami al-Sarraj.¹¹⁴

Until the Jaffa students' congress, the Students' Educational Club had attracted little attention. It was formed at some point around September 1925 and included among its members two of Hamdi al-Husayni's immediate associates, Kamil al-Dajani and Khadr Ja'farawi.¹¹⁵ The club was a branch of an organization formed in Beirut in August 1925 at a gathering of representatives from Damascus, Homs, Hama, Beirut, Jerusalem, Jaffa, Nablus and other cities. Among those gathered in Beirut was Muhi al-Din al-Nusuli, who gave a lecture on scouting.¹¹⁶ By 1929 al-Nusuli had helped organize a nationalist association in the city behind the front of an athletic club, which French authorities felt compelled to close down.¹¹⁷ He also

became a leader of a Muslim scouting association and took an advisory role in the athletic club in Nablus that later functioned as the Istiqlal Party's local office and that, in 1936, served as a headquarters of the general strike in Palestine.¹¹⁸

According to Michael Assaf, a Zionist journalist covering Arab affairs, Hamdi al-Husayni was the primary mover in the 1929 Jaffa students' congress. Assaf explained that al-Husayni was a pan-Arab nationalist attempting to form a party of young radicals, even though the older leadership had thus far successfully stymied his efforts. However, al-Husayni had found a new group to support him, including those 'who studied or are studying in Beirut'.¹¹⁹

In the event, Ibrahim al-Shanti opened the congress in the hall of the Jaffa YMMA with 34 delegates present.¹²⁰ According to the Histadrut organ *Davar*, Hamdi al-Husayni spoke at the congress and harshly criticized the government's pro-Zionist policy. The paper also noted the inflamed atmosphere and the nationalist poetry that the students read.¹²¹ *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* reported that a delegate from Jerusalem (unnamed) submitted to the president a draft resolution that stated that 'the congress does not intervene in politics' and then disappeared when the first session convened. Apparently, some circles had no difficulty in drawing conclusions about the potential for confrontation inherent in the congress.¹²²

The delegates debated the resolution and passed it in an amended form stating that: 'The congress declares that it does not intervene in politics that are not related to the conditions of students.' From that point onwards, the congress took on a distinctly nationalist tone that demonstrated the extent to which student life could be a political matter. The congress unanimously resolved to 'direct a call to the Arab nation (*ummah*), drawing its attention to its obligations in these serious circumstances, urging it to demand complete independence on the basis of Arab unity and support Palestine's demands for independence'.¹²³ Perhaps most significantly, the congress took place days before the outbreak of the riots between Arabs and Jews over control of the Western Wall. None of the accounts in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, or even *Davar* mentioned any discussion of the Western Wall.

Much of the debate and many of the resolutions reflected an inherent tension between affiliating with the British administration and its associated organizations on the one hand and nationalist commit-

ments on the other. The congress resolved to organize independent (namely non-British) scout troops and to arrange celebrations of national holidays. The latter suggestion prompted one delegate, an unnamed Christian, to assert that it was a disgrace that Palestinians did not observe their own holidays while some participated with the government in British observances.¹²⁴

Resolutions on education carried the same tone. In a discussion about the government teacher training college some felt it was better to send trainees abroad where they could learn true nationalism than to the British institution. When the debate turned to the question of coordinating the Jerusalem College of Law's programme with the 'English College' (the Government Arab College), a delegate from Gaza rose and said, 'that's a foreign-manufactured good and should be boycotted!' His comments met with shouts of approval. The congress also passed a resolution that called for the complete boycott of missionary schools. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* claimed that its most vocal proponent was a Christian.¹²⁵ In the same spirit, Ibrahim al-Shanti suggested that the standing executive of the congress be given the authority to call student strikes. The congress closed with the delegates singing the anthem 'We are the Army of Youth, the Youth of the Country'. The delegates then held a demonstration in which they carried an Arab flag through the streets of Jewish Tel Aviv.¹²⁶

The Nationalist Youth after the Riots of 1929

Two days after the Arab students' congress, the Zionist right-wing youth group Betar held a rally at the Western Wall and a second in Tel Aviv the following day. Although the Wall had been given wide coverage the preceding year and was a thorn in the side of the mandatory government, the Arabic press had shown little interest in it for months.¹²⁷ However, at this point al-Buraq defence societies sent warning telegrams and protests to Arab papers with assertions that 'Jews held violent demonstrations against Muslims'.¹²⁸ Riots and revenge riots broke out in Jerusalem and within the week had spread to other parts of the country. The most notorious incidents took place when rioters attacked the largely non-Zionist Jewish quarters of Hebron and Safad, murdering 60 Jews in the first city and 45 in the second. In all, the government reported 133 Jews and 116 Arabs dead, the latter including seven victims of Jewish murderers in addition to casualties from the suppression of the riots.¹²⁹

The high commissioner Sir John Chancellor, in London during the period of violence, returned to Palestine on 31 August. The first official statement on the riots from his office, issued on 1 September, condemned only Arab murderers. This initiated a series of accusations from the Arab Executive and other Arab associations that the policies of the judiciary and police in the wake of the riots were blindly pro-Zionist. On 29 September the Arab Executive met and resolved to call a countrywide strike against the government's post-riot proceedings and press restrictions, but then called it off, probably in response to government pressure. The initiative passed to the YMMAs.¹³⁰ On 11 October, the Jaffa branch hosted a meeting attended by representatives of most of Palestine's YMMAs. The representatives decided to send a delegation to the high commissioner to deliver demands concerning the government's numerous repressive actions in the wake of the riots. If the demands were not met, the YMMAs were to call a general strike. The tensions between the YMMAs and Arab Executive were evident in the criticism that the meeting issued against the executive for cancelling its call for a general strike. The meeting also resolved to boycott foreign and Zionist goods and to support local production.¹³¹ The general strike began on 16 October as ordered by the YMMAs.¹³²

It is telling that the government's efforts to break both the strike and the boycott included measures against secondary school students in Nablus, initiated by Jerome Farrell, the assistant director of education. Farrell had come to Palestine after working first in the intelligence services in Iraq and next as adviser to the Iraqi department of education.¹³³ His later official communications expressed undisguised contempt for Palestinian Arabs, considering only one in thirty 'so endowed by nature as to merit the expenditure of public money on his secondary education'.¹³⁴ Farrell and the Nablus district commissioner went to the city's government school with several members of the police and ordered 20 students to be flogged on their posteriors. The police then spread out in the market area and arrested, by *al-Yarmuk's* estimation, as many as 100 people.¹³⁵ The police fined protesters over the age of 16, and the younger ones, numbering about 80, were beaten publicly on their bare buttocks. Farrell's treatment of the students in Nablus incensed students in Gaza and Acre. Leaders of a student strike committee in Gaza published a statement saying that they knew his 'scandalous crimes' from their own experience.¹³⁶

Significantly, they focused their grievances on an official in the education department rather than on the police or district governor. Students from Nablus and other Palestinian cities began communicating by telephone and telegraph to coordinate a countrywide school strike. Ultimately, Humphrey Bowman came to Nablus to apologize for his assistant's actions.¹³⁷

In the wake of the riots, the government saw any kind of resistance as a threat to order, an expression of sectarian hatred, or Bolshevik agitation. Police arrested the Jaffa-based activists Hamdi al-Husayni, Kamil al-Dajani and Musa al-Kayyali for promoting a boycott of Zionist and foreign goods. Authorities charged them with making inflammatory speeches and distributing similar publications, then fined and released them on condition they did not incite again for a year.¹³⁸ As the boycott movement intensified, mandatory police descended on Jaffa on 23 November, arresting a group of YMMA and Muslim-Christian Association members, including Hamdi al-Husayni and Kamil al-Dajani. In response to the arrests the city went on strike.¹³⁹ A court sentenced al-Husayni to a year's forced residence in Nazareth under police surveillance.¹⁴⁰ The Comintern publication *Imprecorr* (International Press Correspondence) gave al-Husayni and al-Dajani considerable coverage, hailing them as heroes who attempted to turn the riots into an anti-British rebellion.¹⁴¹

At the time of the trials, the Shaw Commission (the British commission of inquiry) was hearing testimony on the causes of the riots. British police officers Quigley and Riggs testified that Hamdi al-Husayni, by virtue of his association with the League to Combat Imperialism, was the head of a communist cell and had exploited sectarian tensions to provoke riots through the Gaza YMMA. Quigley mistakenly asserted that Hamdi al-Husayni was related to the mufti and further claimed that al-Husayni divided his time between Gaza and Jaffa, attempting to foment religious hatred since his return from his meeting with leaders of the League to Combat Imperialism.¹⁴²

For Palestinian Arab nationalists, the officer's claim demonstrated the British government's obtuse incapacity to see resistance to the mandate and Zionism as anything other than religious bigotry or Bolshevik agitation. Several articles appeared in the Arabic press addressing this attitude and defending al-Husayni.¹⁴³ The most detailed was a front-page editorial in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* asserting that he was not a communist but a principled nationalist who had

consistently opposed 'the Buraqists', never associated with the SMC and insisted Palestinians focus their struggle on British imperialism. The paper further claimed that 'The government wants to show all the world that the question of Palestine is a sectarian (*ta'ifi*) issue, every participant in the struggle is a sectarian, and that there is no one in the country who deviates from support for this concept of struggle.'¹⁴⁴ A newspaper that took its name from the Qur'an and whose owner was educated at al-Azhar thus identified sectarianism with the worldview of government officialdom.¹⁴⁵

The government at the same time came to see YMMAs as threatening institutions. In late December Chancellor closed the Jaffa branch and threatened to shut down the city's Orthodox Club.¹⁴⁶ The Gaza YMMA, another centre of anti-mandate sentiment, also came under pressure from the government, which persuaded it to close for a period of two years.¹⁴⁷ According to an article in *al-Sirat*, the Gaza YMMA was closed because Hamdi al-Husayni and his associates refused to allow a more pro-government group to take their place in the leadership. The author compared them with Nero who burned Rome so that there would be no Caesar after him.¹⁴⁸ The symbolism projected the self-view of one acculturated into the then contemporary European, secular style of education. It also reflects his conception of his readers and the cultural reference points he perceived would garner for him credence in their eyes. Thus, his mode of expression suggests the degree to which YMMAs, as institutions intended to strengthen Islamic culture against Western influence, attracted Palestinian Muslims (and apparently some Christians) who expressed themselves in much the same terminology as the British colonial officials educated in the tradition of the Western classics. The author, who considered himself a friend of al-Husayni, also referred to the latter's 'radical nationalism' and acknowledged that al-Husayni and his colleagues may well have been communists. The writer's remarks were further evidence that the YMMAs contained strong Arab nationalist tendencies and a willingness to include even leftist and anti-government orientations.¹⁴⁹

Similar tensions were apparent at the Nablus YMMA and virtually crippled it within the year.¹⁵⁰ According to 'Izzat Darwazah, civil servants comprised three-quarters of the Nablus YMMA's membership in spring 1930¹⁵¹ when the Palestine YMMAs held their third congress.¹⁵² Afterwards, the author of an open letter in *al-Sirat*

explained that the YMMAs were a mixture of civil servants and nationalist youth, but that the government suppressed branches like Gaza and Jaffa that civil servants did not control. The government's anticipated proscription of civil servants from the YMMAs provoked an intense fight between the nationalist youth and the civil servants who saw their livelihood endangered. According to the writer, the congress relented to the civil servants' entreaties, thus making the associations merely places of learning and athletic games. At the same time, the writer pointed out, the government permitted Christian and Jewish civil servants membership in their societies, with extremist Zionist groups not excluded. He thus demanded the formation of politicized YMMAs, with members beholden to 'neither the salary of a civil servant nor a servile elder pseudo-leader (*shaykh mutaza'im*) who does not know honour in all the stages of his life'.¹³³

Despite the civil servants' efforts to distance themselves from the nationalists in the YMMAs, in June 1930 the government issued an order prohibiting all civil servants – Muslim, Christian and Jewish – from membership of any YMMA.¹³⁴ The YMMA's Palestine network was on its knees by July 1930, having stumbled on the issue of whether such an association, in an atmosphere of colonial control and ongoing colonization, could be purely cultural and religious. Under such circumstances, the separation of the cultural from the political became almost impossible. As the YMMA network staggered, youth leaders grasped for an alternative framework for their activism.

Akram Zu'aytir and the Congress of Nationalist Youth

One of the clearest indications of nationalist youth frustration with the existing situation was the attempt led by a young schoolteacher from Nablus, Akram Zu'aytir, to convene a congress of activists. The youngest son of an Opposition politician, Zu'aytir was 20 at the time of the riots and working at a government school in Acre. He was a product of al-Najah School of Nablus and had briefly attended AUB where, like the youth organizer Ibrahim al-Shanti, he had been a member of the cultural association al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqa. A founding member of Acre's YMMA, Zu'aytir had become friends with former Istiqlalists in neighbouring Haifa and was promoting the idea of independence among his students. During the autumn protest strikes Zu'aytir found it difficult to reconcile his nationalist sensibilities with

his employment in government service. He also learnt that he was under the authorities' close surveillance. In early November he left teaching and registered in the government law college in Jerusalem.¹⁵⁵

He soon learnt that Ahmad al-Shuqayri, a former AUB classmate and fellow member of the Acre YMMA, was leaving his post as editor of the Jerusalem paper *Mir'at al-sharq*. At the end of 1929 Zu'aytir called on its owner, Bulus Shahadah, and requested the editorship of the paper. Zu'aytir recorded, 'I summed up the policy of the paper saying that it would be Istiqlalist, meaning that it would call for independence, fight the mandate, and require frankness and candour.' Shahadah responded that the paper could not be used to attack his friends, naming specifically several Opposition politicians. Zu'aytir accepted the position without pay, his only compensation being that he had gained a platform for his views.¹⁵⁶

Zu'aytir soon advocated in *Mir'at al-sharq* tactics of popular protest that mirrored Mahatma Gandhi's methods in India in the same weeks. Gandhi had returned to the leadership of the Indian independence movement in 1929, ending a four-year respite. In December Indian leaders prepared for talks in London, just as the Palestinian Arab Executive did. Gandhi declared that the goal of the Indian movement should be complete independence and outlined a policy of non-cooperation with the British including civil disobedience, non-payment of taxes and resignation from government posts. Four months later he undertook his famous march across India to protest against the salt monopoly, receiving wide coverage in the world press. His initial band of 78 expanded in 24 days to number thousands. In the areas through which he passed more than 300 village headmen resigned from their government posts.¹⁵⁷

Zu'aytir's first article in *Mir'at al-Sharq*, titled 'Istiqlalists', outlined his principle of complete independence and his belief that the strength of Zionism rested ultimately on the British mandate. Zu'aytir began immediately to draw attention to the Indian independence movement and to demand its imitation in Palestine. Within days he had published an article calling on the youth to organize and hold a congress. He contrasted the youth with those who were not made for struggle (*jihad*) and called on young nationalists to close ranks and form their own societies.¹⁵⁸ As the Arab Executive formed a delegation to go to London to take the case of Palestine directly to the Colonial Office, Zu'aytir and his associates clearly intended to impress upon

the delegation the need to demand nothing short of full independence.

Before the end of January 1930, Zu'aytir's advocacy of a youth congress received press statements of support. Muhammad 'Ali al-Salih, an Istiqlalist friend of Zu'aytir in Haifa, submitted a letter to *Mir'at* suggesting that the youth congress include representatives of all the Arab regions and that they write an Arab national pact. Zu'aytir travelled to Haifa and Acre to discuss the congress idea and found it was well received.¹⁵⁹ In March, Gandhi's month-long march across India inspired Zu'aytir to try to organize a similar protest in Palestine. After consulting with a group that included some of his former students and a few former civil servants who had fallen from grace with the mandatory government, Zu'aytir wrote an article calling for the formation of an army of defence. This was to walk across Palestine spreading a patriotic spirit, discouraging land sales to Zionists and encouraging national industry. He had more than 20 volunteers by 9 April.¹⁶⁰

During the previous two weeks the Arab Executive's delegation had arrived in London and the British government had released its report on the 1929 riots (the Shaw Report). The mandatory administration clearly had no interest in pressure groups in Palestine pushing the Arab Executive's delegation into a maximal negotiating position. In early March, the Jerusalem deputy district commissioner notified the acting chief secretary of the Palestine government that the Palestine police considered Zu'aytir's editorship of *Mir'at al-sharq* undesirable, but complained that no existing law could justify his removal from the paper's staff. He recommended warning Zu'aytir about the tone of the articles appearing in the paper.¹⁶¹ A few weeks later, the head of Palestine's criminal investigation department summoned him to some meetings, the last of which involved a good deal of snarling and tooth baring from both parties.¹⁶² Two days later, police arrested Zu'aytir for giving a provocative speech at the Nabi Musa festival in Jerusalem.¹⁶³ After a series of hearings, a court sentenced him under the Prevention of Crimes Ordinance to internal exile in Nablus, confinement to his home after dark and a £P5 security bond. In consequence, he was prohibited from continuing his studies at the law college.¹⁶⁴ There can be little doubt that the government was more concerned about removing Zu'aytir from the editorship of *Mir'at al-Sharq* and stopping his protest march across Palestine than about his

speech at the Nabi Musa festival. After Zu'aytir's exile to Nablus, Ruhi 'Abd al-Hadi, the acting chief secretary, informed the Jerusalem deputy district commissioner that 'Akram Zuayter may not be recognized as the responsible editor of Meraat Esh-Shark for not being a resident of Jerusalem where the paper is published.'¹⁶⁵

Akram Zu'aytir's close friend and fellow nationalist, Wasif Kamal, was a student in London at the time of the Arab Executive delegation's arrival there. After publication of the British government's Shaw Report, which identified Zionist immigration and land purchases as the primary cause of the disturbances in Palestine, Kamal wrote to Zu'aytir expressing his optimism about the prospects of the delegation. However, Kamal and other Palestinian students in London rapidly lost confidence in Palestine's representatives to the British government. Kamal and his fellow students met the delegation and received a sympathetic hearing from Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who agreed that the delegation was divided within itself. After the meeting in May, Kamal wrote to Zu'aytir, telling him they 'must attempt to destroy [the leaders'] influence'. He added, '[We must avoid] confrontation with them until the day comes when the youth can seize the reins of the national movement, relying on the support of the people.'¹⁶⁶

By September Zu'aytir had also become desperate about the Palestinian leadership's unwillingness to adopt a more confrontational stance towards the government. From his exile in Nablus, he wrote three articles for *al-Yarmuk* citing Gandhi's civil disobedience programme in India as the model to be followed.¹⁶⁷ He also outlined a plan to establish in a number of Palestinian cities 'Istiqlalist blocs' (*kutal istiqlaliyah*) composed of young activists committed to Arab independence and unity rather than obtaining government jobs. He envisioned each bloc coordinating with others and holding a congress to determine a programme to end foreign domination.¹⁶⁸ In the autumn of 1930 Zu'aytir engaged in forming precisely such a bloc in Nablus, and the group decided in mid-November to contact a group of youth in Gaza to establish a bloc there.¹⁶⁹ Apparently, Zu'aytir's activity made him less than welcome in his hometown. Cairo's *al-Shura* reported that a group in Nablus had written to the government asking for Zu'aytir to be exiled to Beer Sheva because he was causing strife in Nablus.¹⁷⁰

From the summer of 1930, the press gave increasing coverage to

the idea of forming a political party that expressed the nationalist youth's demands for independence. This trend gained strength over the next two years as the Arab Executive showed its unwillingness to confront the mandatory government, and older nationalists defected from the Arab Executive and Majlisi faction to advocate the formation of an uncompromising nationalist party. Subhi al-Khadra', a former member of al-Fatat and Istiqlal in Damascus and a secretary of the Arab Executive, was one of the first of this group to join the demand for immediate independence. In August he published an article in *al-Jami'ah al-arabiyah* asserting that Jewish immigration was simply a tool of British imperial strategy, enabling the British to pursue a sectarian policy of divide and rule on the model of their practices in Egypt, Iraq and India. He added, '[Great Britain] regards this Arab totality as "non-Jewish communities". So we, in the view of the British are not one nation. Nor are we Arab communities. We are "non-Jewish communities"!'. According to al-Khadra', it was thus necessary to confront the British first, as Zionism was merely a consequence of British policy. His article earned him an internal exile in Safad.¹⁷¹ By the end of 1930 three of those who later became leaders of the Istiqlal Party were in internal exile in Palestine.

Conclusions

Two contradictory tendencies appeared among Palestinian Arab youth in the late 1920s. The first was the acquisition of education and English language with the goal of obtaining a job in the civil service or police. With this also came affiliation with British-sponsored institutions including the boy scouts, YMCAs, and civil servants' clubs. The second trend represented continuity with developments under way prior to the First World War. This was the elaboration of a modern Arab high culture and a strengthening propensity to assert it in nationalist terms. The trend took its clearest form in the efforts of veteran nationalists such as 'Izzat Darwazah and Shaykh Kamil al-Qassab to take primary and secondary school students under their wings and teach them about the existence of the Arab nation and its right to independence. Darwazah's school textbooks provide evidence of the manner in which the national idea was articulated to students in Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s.

To describe the process as the *inculcation* of nationalism would be misleading. The expansion of literacy, liberal education and bilingual-

ism had as its consequence an awareness of the fact that the world was increasingly organized into nation-states and that nation-states were the most powerful agents in world affairs. Arab teachers and students saw the revival of ancient nations and their attainment of independence as the normal and natural culmination of historical processes, marking arrival in the modern age. Like other 'bilingual intelligentsias' of colonized areas, Palestinian students 'had access, inside the classroom and outside, to models of nation, nation-ness, and nationalism distilled from the turbulent, chaotic experiences of more than a century of American and European history'.¹⁷² Many educated youth in Palestine saw themselves as a new elite set apart from the former generation of notables by their modern education and because they came of age in the epoch of nation-states. Hamdi al-Husayni and his colleagues found their first support at the Arab Students' Congress, indicating the attraction of these ideas to secondary school students who, in their teens at the time, had no memory of the Ottoman system. These developments suggested that informed public opinion, expressed by a growing literate and politically aware class of citizens, was to be articulated increasingly in nationalist terms.

The anglicizing of the administration and much of Palestinian associational life represented the divorce of institutions of power and influence from Arab culture. The young Arabs who sought access to power and influence through affiliation with the state and British-sponsored institutions were confronted with the fact that such access came at the cost of subordinating their own identity and culture. A career in the bureaucracy or the police implied acquiescence in – if not support for – the Jewish national home, and it intensified the dilemma of the educated Arab elite.

This dilemma appeared most plainly in the YMMAs, where educated young Muslims (and some Christians) pursued Arab and Islamic cultural interests. Within the first year of their establishment, young nationalists attempted to turn these YMMAs into vehicles to demand independence, bringing the nationalists into conflict with civil servants and pro-government notables. This can be seen in hindsight as an early step towards popular mobilization. In the absence of nationalist and pro-independence associations, activists attempted to appropriate the existing associations to challenge British rule. In the wake of the 1929 riots, the activists' conflict with the civil servants split the YMMAs and, consequently, several of the associations were

closed. A similar mechanism of appropriation was apparent in the press. Two of the most outspoken activists, Akram Zu'aytir and Hamdi al-Husayni gained positions as editors in Opposition journals. The attraction of the Opposition leaders to this relationship was clearly that they could imply that Hajj Amin al-Husayni had become an instrument of the British, and they could associate themselves with authentic nationalists.

With the collapse of the most anti-mandate YMMAs, nationalists then began searching for an alternative organization to bring together the most committed activists. Akram Zu'aytir's visualization of blocs of dedicated nationalists distributed throughout the country, who would convene a congress to determine a national programme for independence, saw fruition six years later in the national committees that coordinated a long general strike. But the endeavour of his associated nationalist youth to form a vanguard party was realized sooner, as was the establishment of nationalist newspapers outside the control of factional leaders who vied for the favours of the government. These developments took place in an environment of specific threats and opportunities. As we shall see in the next chapter, some of them were manifested at the inter-Arab level.

Chapter 3

The Arab Unity Scheme and the Beginnings of Popular Mobilization

The young activists starting to assert themselves in Palestine's political affairs looked to an older generation of Arab nationalists for guidance. In this chapter I examine the persistence of working relations among veteran nationalists in several Arab countries and Europe, and see how they extended the network to the nationalist youth in Palestine. The close relations among the older nationalists began, in some cases, before the war and, more frequently, during the period of King Faysal's government in Damascus. They had come to political maturity either within the Ottoman bureaucracy and military, or in training for careers in these services. Thus, they had participated in the expanding administrative power of the state and experienced the attendant transformations in perceptions of space and time.

As civil servants and military officers many of the veteran nationalists had pursued careers that took them through the Ottoman capital and to different provinces, and their training required a familiarity with the affairs and languages of Western Europe. They had played the game of politics more from the side of the increasingly intrusive state than from the side of the local grandees. In consequence, their horizons of political concern had extended to international affairs and those of the empire as a whole, and they were inclined to disdain the provincialism of the notables.¹ To these first Arab nationalists, the borders the Great Powers imposed on the Arab world in the period after the First World War seemed artificial, and the issue of Arab independence could not be separated from that of Arab unity.

The nationalists attempted to introduce Palestinian Arabs to the idea of independence at a time when Arab unity appeared attainable

and when a renewed British government commitment to the Zionist enterprise precipitated a crisis for the Palestinian political elite. Mobilizing around the concept of the nation in these circumstances meant questioning what defined a nation. The activists thus took on the issue of the relationship between conceptions of Palestinian, pan-Syrian and pan-Arab identity. The deployment or suppression of each of these concepts during a period of protest in 1931 expressed both the acculturation of the activists and their strategies in the face of three especially significant developments. These were a sharpened confrontation with Zionism in Palestine resulting particularly from the government's arming of Jewish settlements, a shift in relations among the Arab states and mandates brought about by the prospect of independence for Iraq, and the advance of British imperial communications connecting the Arab lands.

Finally, in this chapter I demonstrate that protests in Palestine during the summer of 1931, though involving relatively few participants and of short duration, significantly altered relations among the government, notable politicians and their constituencies. The protests marked a new pattern of politics, which, with repetition and practice, intensified over the next five years. The methods of organizing the protests also signalled the coming of a consciously constructed and conspicuously nationalist public sphere that sustained a discourse on the future of Palestine and its place in an Arab nation.

The Istiqlalists and Arab Unity

When the French dismantled the Arab government in Damascus in 1920, many al-Fatat leaders, representing some of the most active opponents of foreign domination, fled Syria. The largest group of them concentrated in Transjordan where they briefly reconstituted the Istiqlal Party. The Istiqlalists came to occupy leading positions in the developing bureaucracy and army of the state Amir 'Abdullah, Faysal's older brother, endeavoured to form in 1921. The Istiqlalists were influential enough to attract a number of Transjordanians to their ranks, so the party's membership reached 150 to 200.² The leaders included Rashid Talia^c, 'Adil Arslan, Ahmad Hilmi 'Abd al-Baqi, the brothers 'Adil and Nabih al-'Azmah, Sami al-Sarraj, Shaykh Kamil al-Qassab, Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli and Khalid al-Hakim. All these, with the exception of al-Qassab, a school director, had served in the Ottoman administration or army; other than Talia^c and the al-

‘Azmah brothers, all had been involved in prewar nationalist societies or the decentralization movement.³ The Istiqlalists did not hide their intention to make Transjordan a base for anti-French operations designed to gain the complete independence and unity of Greater Syria. Thus, British authorities, fearing that the Istiqlalists jeopardized Anglo–French relations, prevailed upon ‘Abdullah to purge his administration of party members in 1924. The Istiqlalists consequently scattered to the Hijaz, Baghdad, Jerusalem, Haifa and Cairo.⁴

A number of those who joined Amir ‘Abdullah’s government had first found haven in Cairo, where they joined a group of about 50 Syrian exiled activists, many of whom belonged to the Party of Syrian Unity, which former members of the decentralization movement had organized in 1918.⁵ The Istiqlalists in Cairo had considered re-establishing their party there, but instead decided to cooperate with the Party of Syrian Unity in forming a committee to represent a number of pro-independence parties inside and outside Syria.⁶ In August and September 1921, the Party of Syrian Unity convened a conference in Geneva, Switzerland, with 15 representatives from Syria and Palestine, in addition to several from immigrant communities in the USA, Argentina and Chile.⁷ The congress passed resolutions demanding recognition of the complete independence of Syria, Lebanon and Palestine, and of their rights to unite under a single parliamentary government and to federate with other Arab states. Another resolution demanded the cancellation of the Balfour Declaration.⁸

Shakib Arslan, scion of a princely Druze family of Mount Lebanon, served as secretary general of the Geneva congress. Unlike his much younger brother ‘Adil, Amir Shakib was a late convert to Arab nationalism and, as a deputy in the Ottoman parliament, had aligned with the CUP. He became during the interwar period one of the most acclaimed Arab poets, journalists and activists, known for his unflagging advocacy of independence for the Arab and Islamic lands.⁹ Indicating the new direction his political activity took after the war, he identified himself as a member of the Istiqlal Party at the Geneva congress, even though he had been in Europe during the time of Faysal’s Damascus government.¹⁰ Arslan also soon joined the board of the League to Combat Imperialism in Berlin, of which Hamdi al-Husayni was the representative in Palestine.¹¹ Arslan’s close friend, the Islamic modernist Rashid Rida served as vice president of the Geneva congress and as a representative of the Party of Syrian Unity.

Born in Tripoli in 1865, he made his home in Cairo, where he edited his famous *al-Manar* journal. During the war, he had sided with the Arab movement and in 1920 presided at the General Syrian Congress in Damascus.¹² He was also, as mentioned in Chapter 1, Hajj Amin al-Husayni's friend and mentor.

The 1921 congress in Geneva established as its permanent body the executive committee of the Syro-Palestinian Congress, which was based in Cairo. The membership of the executive varied over the course of its existence, but until 1928 it was divided between veterans of the Istiqlal Party and members of the Party of Syrian Unity, who generally dominated the institution.¹³ From the beginning, the Istiqlal Party's principal representative was Asa'd Daghir, a Lebanese Christian journalist. He had joined an Arab cultural society, the Literary Club (*al-Muntadi al-adabi*), as a law student in Istanbul before the war and had been a leader of the Istiqlal Party in Damascus.¹⁴ Michel Lutfallah was president of the Cairo executive as well as of the Party of Syrian Unity. The son of a Greek Orthodox Lebanese émigré and one of the wealthiest men in Egypt, he was also thoroughly acculturated in French and maintained close ties with French commercial and governing circles.¹⁵ Rashid Rida served as vice president of the executive. In May 1922, the executive committee appointed a delegation to represent the case for Syrian and Palestinian independence to the League of Nations in Geneva. Shakib Arslan and the Istiqlalists Ihsan al-Jabiri and Riyad al-Sulh comprised the delegation from 1924.¹⁶

In summer 1925 a revolt against the French administration in Syria broke out in the Druze hills of the south and quickly spread to other places, including Damascus. The French finally suppressed the revolt in spring 1927, but only after committing 50,000 troops to the campaign and resorting to artillery and aerial bombardment of urban areas. On one of the most infamous days of the revolt, troops shelling Damascus killed an estimated 600–1000 Syrians, the overwhelming preponderance of them non-combatants.¹⁷ Palestinian Arabs, who only a few years previously had known no border between Palestine and Syria, identified strongly with the rebels and with the larger Syrian population enduring the hardships of the revolt. Soon after its outbreak, fundraisers formed committees in a number of Palestinian cities to collect money, ostensibly as humanitarian aid but also to finance weapons and supplies for the rebels.¹⁸

Palestinians and Syrian exiles in Jerusalem brought these local

organizations under the supervision of a single committee, based in Jerusalem and under the presidency of Hajj Amin al-Husayni. Most of the Syrians in the Jerusalem committee were former members of the Istiqlal Party who had known the mufti at the time of the Damascus government. They included the three Lebanese Druze 'Adil Arslan, Rashid Talia' (until his death in 1926), and 'Ajaj Nuwayhid. Among the others were the Syrians Nabih al-'Azma and Ahmad Hilmi 'Abd al-Baqi, and the Palestinians Subhi al-Khadra', and 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi.¹⁹ In addition, 'Izzat Darwazah, Ahmad Hilmi 'Abd al-Baqi, Subhi al-Khadra' and 'Ajaj Nuwayhid all worked under Hajj Amin in the administration of the SMC.²⁰ As we saw in the previous chapter, former Istiqlalists had also concentrated in Haifa, teaching in private Islamic schools there and contributing to the newspaper *al-Yarmuk*.

The Istiqlalists initially established the Jerusalem aid committee to offset the influence of a parallel aid committee in Cairo, largely controlled by Michel Lutfallah.²¹ The rivalry between the two factions became acute in late 1926 as the French suppressed the revolt around Damascus, and the Syrian exiles therefore shifted the predominance of the funding to Druze rebels under Sultan al-Atrash in the south of Syria.²² By summer the next year, French forces had succeeded in driving the Druze fighters into Wadi Sirhan in Transjordan, which became both a base and a refugee camp. British officials in Transjordan, complying with French entreaties, expelled the Druze rebels who then found haven in the Saudi-controlled area of the western Jazirah, Qiryat al-Milh.²³ While the revolt collapsed, the Istiqlalists watched in fear as Michel Lutfallah and his supporters responded to conciliatory gestures from the French; the Istiqlalists even alleged that Lutfallah sought French recognition of an emirate for his family in Lebanon.²⁴ The Istiqlalists also sought to continue channelling aid to the Druze rebels at the expense of the exiles in Cairo and aspiring politicians inside Syria. Lutfallah's supporters in turn accused Hajj Amin al-Husayni of pilfering funds intended for the rebels.²⁵ The antagonists waged their bitter dispute openly in the Palestinian press, with the Opposition journal *Filastin* championing Lutfallah's faction and the pro-Majlisi papers *al-Yarmuk* and *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* advancing the Istiqlalist position. Clearly, Palestinian and Syrian affairs remained intertwined.

Shakib Arslan, as spokesman for the Istiqlalists and a passionate supporter of the Druze rebels, advocated dissolving the executive

committee in Cairo because of what he believed was Lutfallah's excessive influence over it. Rashid Rida strongly opposed his initiative, believing that Arslan undervalued the executive's importance.²⁶ Rida, with Kamil al-Qassab's help, thus began efforts in Cairo to reconcile the Istiqlalists with Lutfallah and his supporters, but ultimately failed.²⁷ As a result, at the beginning of 1928 the executive committee in Cairo split into two rival institutions, each bearing the same name. Rida, despite his prior membership in the Party of Syrian Unity, joined the Istiqlalist-dominated committee, which included seven Syrians.²⁸ The formation of the Arslan-Istiqlalist executive committee in Cairo was achieved just as the French issued an amnesty for rebels and their supporters, but which excluded the leading Istiqlalists.²⁹ By that time, a coalition of politicians inside Syria had begun to take form and, in the spring of 1928, they expressed their willingness to participate in elections for a national assembly. This coalition, known as the National Bloc, thus embarked on a policy its members later termed 'honourable cooperation' with the French administration.³⁰

Soon after the establishment of the Istiqlalists' Cairo executive, Shukri al-Quwwatli, one of its members and a prewar member of al-Fatat, travelled to Berlin where he began to work with Shakib Arslan on a plan for Arab unity and the formation of a unified front against the imperial powers. According to Philip Khoury, 'From December 1928 until July 1930, when he returned to Damascus, Quwwatli pursued Shakib Arslan's master plan, moving between Jerusalem, Cairo, and the Hijaz, widening his contacts in a effort to set the Arab nationalist movement on a surer footing.'³¹ Arslan was especially concerned with establishing a base for his planned movement in an independent Arab country that was capable of rapid development and of serving as the core of an Arab federation. For this, he looked to the kingdoms of the Hijaz and the Najd under the rule of 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Sa'ud, whom Arslan greatly admired.³²

Arslan visited Ibn Sa'ud during the 1929 Hajj, introducing him to Fawzi al-Qawuqji, a veteran of the Syrian revolt and former Ottoman officer who had accepted membership in al-Fatat during the First World War.³³ In the Hijaz, al-Qawuqji joined a number of Syrians, Egyptians and Palestinians who worked to develop a modern military and administration for Ibn Sa'ud. Among them were Istiqlalists who, after the Syrian revolt, took positions in his government, hoping to make it the paragon of the reformed, independent Arab state. The

same idea excited the imaginations of the nationalist youth in Palestine, as is indicated by a press article signed 'A Student'. The writer asserted, 'Here is an Arab kingdom in a stage of its growth analogous to that of Prussia in the year 1870.'³⁴ Among the Istiqlalists, Nabih al-'Azmah helped develop the Hijazi army, Kamil al-Qassab supervised education and 'Adil Arslan attempted to organize administration. They were, however, frustrated by Ibn Sa'ud's unwillingness to accept advice and by his resistance to their demands for an organized budget and a constitution. By the end of 1931, they had all left in despair.³⁵

Arslan and the Istiqlalists had by then shifted their intentions of establishing a base for their Arab unity movement to Iraq. King Faysal's administration and the British government had in 1930 signed a treaty promising Iraq legal independence in 1932. Faysal, who aspired to rule Syria again as part of a larger Arab state, further raised the hopes of Arslan and his associates by entering discussions with the French on the possibility of him or one of his brothers becoming king of Syria. French authorities at the time made little headway in their negotiations with the National Bloc, and they either considered emulating the success of the British government in securing its position in Iraq through Faysal's kingship, or they wished the Bloc to believe they contemplated it.³⁶

In September 1930, Arslan and Ihsan al-Jabiri met the king in Antibes, France. Faysal assured the two that he wished to unite Syria with Iraq at the earliest possible time. Arslan and al-Jabiri fully supported the scheme but pointed out that such a union would threaten Ibn Sa'ud, who feared a Hashemite attempt to recapture the Hijaz. They therefore proposed that Iraq and the kingdoms of the Hijaz and the Najd establish an alliance that would constitute the beginning of an eventual Arab union. To this Faysal agreed.³⁷ The Iraqi prime minister, Nuri al-Sa'id announced the 'alliance' in February 1931, though its critics described it as little more than vague declarations of friendship and principles.³⁸ In addition to initiating the alliance scheme, Arslan and his immediate circle had also begun to advocate the convening of a general Arab congress to write a programme for Arab unity and complete independence from imperial powers. Riyadh al-Sulh announced in June 1930 that King Faysal supported the plan, and that a preparatory committee had been formed.³⁹

In the same period, British imperial policy pulled Iraqi interests towards Syria and Palestine. Palestinian newspapers reported that the

British government intended to build a railway from Baghdad to Haifa as well as a pipeline to carry oil from northern Iraq to a terminal in either Tripoli or Haifa.⁴⁰ Nuri al-Sa'ud commented to the press that within four years a rail link to the Mediterranean would lead to economic ties between Iraq and Egypt.⁴¹ The likelihood of Palestine becoming effectively Iraq's Mediterranean coast, in addition to talk of an Arab alliance, contributed to the importance of the railway and pipeline in the minds of some Palestinians. The editor of *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, Munif al-Husayni, attacked the Arab alliance scheme in front-page articles, claiming that the plan amounted to a British alliance in an Arab shell that was related to the Baghdad–Haifa railway. He feared that the railway would cross Saudi territory and thus introduce British influence into the only independent Arab land.⁴² Shakib Arslan responded in the same newspaper with a defence of the alliance, assuring his readers that King Faysal's intentions were sound and that Ibn Sa'ud would reject a British railway on his land even if Nuri al-Sa'ud proposed it.⁴³

The Palestine government's criminal investigation division also turned its attentions to Shakib Arslan and the Istiqlalists. A report in May 1931 warned that Arslan was leading a 'revolutionary scheme to deliver the Arab countries, particularly Palestine and Syria, from foreign suzerainty'. In addition to suggesting that Hajj Amin al-Husayni was party to the plan, it noted that Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, an Istiqlalist working in the office of information at the Cairo-based executive committee of the Syro-Palestinian Congress, had left Cairo for Jerusalem, intending to establish a newspaper there.⁴⁴

Palestine after the Publication of the MacDonald Letter

The discussion of Arab unity and Arab alliances came at a tense time for Palestinian Arabs. It coincided with developments that at first seemed to show that their case had finally gained a sympathetic hearing in London, but was quickly transformed into a demonstration of Zionist diplomatic power at the imperial centre. In October 1930, Lord Passfield (Sydney Webb), the colonial secretary in the Labour government, issued a white paper outlining new policies for the British administration in Palestine. The document reflected the findings of the Shaw Commission, which had investigated the causes of the 1929 riots, and those of the report by Sir John Hope Simpson on landless Palestinian Arabs. Both of these attributed the riots to Arab

anxiety over Jewish immigration and land acquisition, a conclusion that was supported by High Commissioner Chancellor.

Reflecting this view, the White Paper tied future immigration quotas not only to levels of employment of Jews, but to that of Arabs as well. The White Paper also criticized Labour Zionism's demand that Jewish capital be used exclusively for Jewish employment. Further, it declared that future Jewish land purchases were to be contingent on the availability of agricultural land for Palestinian Arabs and that state lands were to be regarded as a preserve for Palestinian Arabs lacking sufficient areas of cultivation. In the light of the extent of Arab landlessness depicted by the Hope Simpson Report, the White Paper seemed to portend the curtailment of Jewish land purchases by the mandatory administration. In sum, the White Paper entertained the limitation of the expansion of the Jewish national home in Palestine so that it might neither achieve a majority Jewish population in the country nor develop into a sovereign Jewish state.⁴⁵

The White Paper must have led the Arab Executive to believe that its delegation's lobbying in London during the previous summer had born fruit because the executive did not respond to the document until the next January – over two months after its publication. Although the Arab Executive's statement expressed agreement with aspects of the Hope Simpson Report, and at points, even gratitude to its author, the response characterized the White Paper as 'nothing new' in terms of Arab political rights and expressed scepticism towards the British government's professed willingness to ease the economic plight of Palestinians.⁴⁶

The Zionist leadership, on the other hand, was infuriated by the implications of the new statement of policy. In London, Chaim Weizmann brought to bear his formidable diplomatic skills on members of the cabinet and parliament to counter the implications of the statement of policy, thus bypassing the Colonial Office entirely. His efforts quickly yielded results. On 13 February 1931 Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald sent Weizmann a letter that interpreted the White Paper as a restatement of longstanding policies.⁴⁷ Although sections of the letter were vaguely worded, it assured Weizmann that the government did not consider halting Jewish immigration or land sales and that it remained committed to the settlement of Jews in the country. The letter also renounced the White Paper's criticisms of Jewish organizations that employed only Jewish labour.⁴⁸

The MacDonald letter did probably more than anything else to inspire distrust of the British government among Palestinian Arabs. Indeed, the Arab Executive's angry official response said as much.⁴⁹ What it did not say, and what each of its members undoubtedly knew, was that the MacDonald letter made it almost impossible for the Palestinian Arab leaders simultaneously to maintain credibility before their constituencies and a cooperative relationship with the mandatory authorities. Over the next four months the Arab Executive became paralysed by internal contentions over what policy to pursue and by increasing demands from the public for a programme to confront both the Zionist movement and the British administration.

The nationalist youth movement and older nationalists who had lost all patience with the Arab Executive largely mobilized this emerging public opinion. As early as May 1930, the Palestinian youth leader Akram Zu'aytir – still confined by government orders to Nablus – had become convinced that the notables of Palestine were misled if they thought they could rely on the British sense of justice and compassion to determine the fate of the country. However, discussion of an Arab alliance was increasing in the press at this time and the prospect of support from the Arab lands offered Zu'aytir some hope.⁵⁰

The Arab alliance's appeal to Zu'aytir was an indication of the influence on him of the ideas then current in Istiqlalist circles. As we have seen in the previous chapter, he called his first article as editor of *Mir'at al-sharq* 'Istiqlalists'. He had linked the term to the image of Gandhi because of the latter's uncompromising demand for the independence of India, but there can be little doubt that both Zu'aytir and his readers also associated the term with the Istiqlalist group, of which his mentor, 'Izzat Darwazah was a prominent member. The coalescence of the Istiqlalists as a coherent political faction by 1927 and their outspoken support for Syrian independence and Arab unity elevated them as examples and tutors to the young nationalists who were beginning to assert themselves in Palestinian political affairs. Zu'aytir exemplified these younger activists whom the veterans cultivated. Several Istiqlalists in Haifa had befriended him and, at the age of 18, he had begun to contribute to their journal, *al-Yarmuk*. He also sent his articles to the Cairo newspaper *al-Shura*, owned and edited by the Nabulsi Muhammad 'Ali al-Tahir, who was close to Arslan and the Istiqlalists.⁵¹

Zu'aytir, like the Istiqlalists, greatly admired Shakib Arslan and turned to him for guidance. At some point prior to March 1931, Zu'aytir wrote asking him to outline the path to national liberation. Arslan couched his lengthy reply in terms of both pan-Arab nationalism and pan-Islam, but emphasized that the Arab path to nationhood was comparable in its development with that of the European nations, including the Balkan peoples of the former Ottoman Empire. Arslan's letter did not mention convening an Arab congress, but rather emphasized education, institution building and boycotts on the model of the Indian independence movement.⁵²

Zu'aytir and his young associates represented the link between the veteran nationalists enjoying access to Arab kings and politicians on one hand, and the organizers of popular rallies and street protests on the other. Some months before the MacDonald letter's publication, Zu'aytir had been attempting to organize a small pro-independence bloc in Nablus to work outside the Arab Executive for the independence of Palestine and to coordinate with similar groups in other Palestinian cities. Zu'aytir redoubled his efforts after the announcement of the letter. With his friend Wasif Kamal, who had just returned from his studies in London, and with some other associates, Zu'aytir began to organize private meetings in Nablus to which he invited notables and leading personalities of all orientations to discuss a plan of action. Of the 20 people who attended the first meeting in mid-February 1931 (during Ramadan), three were either former members of al-Fatat or of the Istiqlal Party in Damascus.⁵³ One of these three, 'Izzat Darwazah, was also a member of the Arab Executive. Acting as a committee, the gathering decided to telegraph the Arab Executive requesting it to call a general congress to discuss the MacDonald letter and to formulate a clear response to it. If the Arab Executive did not take action in ten days, the Nablus committee resolved to meet again, bypass the Arab Executive and call a general congress in the city. With the intention of increasing the pressure on the Arab Executive, the committee in Nablus decided to call for a large demonstration and to cancel 'Id al-Fitr celebrations to display the people's anguished feelings towards the MacDonald letter.

After Friday prayers on 19 February the committee held a public meeting in Nablus, at which several organizers explained the need to take a strong stance on the MacDonald letter. Zu'aytir did not speak because his term in internal exile had not ended. The meeting pro-

duced a declaration that condemned the MacDonald letter, demanded an end to land sales and immigration, and rejected the mandate. It also issued a protest against the government's refusal to authorize the planned demonstration.⁵⁴ Because the Arab Executive took no action in organizing an effective challenge to the MacDonald letter, the initiative remained with the activists in Nablus; however, support came also from the Islamic Society in Haifa, in which a number of Istiqlalists were active. The Islamic Society, mirroring the Nablus committee's programme, also held a large public meeting and issued a call for a national congress in Nablus to discuss the current situation.⁵⁵ The public meetings in Nablus and Haifa adumbrated the rallies of the Istiqlal Party of the next year, in which the assemblies issued statements designed to push the Arab Executive into a confrontational stance towards the mandatory government. The meetings also anticipated the formation of the city-based national committees that later coordinated the general strike of 1936.

The sense of crisis that pervaded politically aware elements of the population provoked questions about practical strategies for protecting Palestine from colonization as well as related questions about the nature of Palestinian political identity. The appeal of the Istiqlalists' pan-Arab and pan-Syrian orientation became apparent among the activists in Nablus as Zu'aytir and his bloc began to organize Palestine's first celebration of the Declaration of Syrian Independence of 8 March 1920. In considering this, he asked himself, 'Why do we not celebrate this observance? Is not Palestine South Syria? Was it not represented at that congress?'⁵⁶

Zu'aytir and his fellow organizers wrote a programme for the celebration and contacted speakers by telephone and telegraph. They reserved the Nablus cinema hall for the occasion, designating a special section for the press. In addition to inviting National Bloc leaders in Syria and nationalists in Transjordan, the organizers called on 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, formerly King Faysal's personal secretary, to address the gathering, which was held 'in the name of South Syria' on 8 March.⁵⁷ The celebration opened with a group of scouts from al-Najah School singing anthems and trooping an Arab flag into the cinema, which was decorated with pictures of Sharif Husayn and King Faysal. Delegations from several Palestinian cities were present. The speakers included future members of the Istiqlal Party's central committee 'Ajaj Nuwayhid, 'Izzat Darwazah, Fahmi al-'Abbushi, and

Akram Zu'aytir, all of whom had also been involved in the leadership of the YMMAs. Always keen to portray the Majlisi faction as an instrument of the government, *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* pointed out that most of the national leaders were not present including, most notably, Hajj Amin al-Husayni. The paper compared this with the government employees who absented themselves from Arab nationalist holiday observances. However, the meeting received enthusiastic coverage in the Majlisi organ *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*.⁵⁸

In his speech 'Ajaj Nuwayhid criticized the mandate in general and the Baghdad–Haifa railway scheme in particular. Revealing the linkage between the Palestinian cause and the Arslan–Istiqlalist Arab unity scheme, he declared the need to hold a pan-Arab congress at which Arab leaders would decide a programme to achieve the unity and independence of the Arab lands. 'Izzat Darwazah then presented this last demand as part of a resolution. In a ritual that became typical of the popular rallies as they increased in frequency and size over the next five years, the resolution was read and then approved by the assembly. The resolution thus responded to the challenge of Zionist colonization by identifying Palestine with Syrian and Arab independence and unity, and the organizers sought to orchestrate a public and popular affirmation of such ideas.⁵⁹

Over the next few months, such sentiments flowed increasingly from Nablus. One wellspring of these currents was the city's Muslim-Christian Association, which soon changed its name to the Arab Patriotic Society (*al-Jami'ah al-wataniyah al-'arabiyah*), thus shedding the sectarian implications of its former name.⁶⁰ Under 'Izzat Darwazah's presidency, the association held a public meeting in April to protest about the atrocities Italian troops had perpetrated while suppressing the revolt in Libya. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* tellingly reported the event under the headline 'Public Opinion in Nablus'.⁶¹ This was one expression of the fact that the activists saw themselves as informing and even constructing public opinion as a necessary element in a new style of politics. They recognized especially the necessity of the press for populist politics.

The Newspaper *al-Hayat*

Early in 1931, Zu'aytir's colleague in the nationalist youth movement, Hashim al-Sabi', wrote a three-part article in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* titled 'The Istiqlalist Principle Will Win'.⁶² He contrasted the pro-

independence activists with the moderates who feared the government and saw the former group as extremists and dreamers. He promised that serious steps would soon be taken towards demanding independence. He next explained that the Palestinian press failed in its duty to stand up to the British by naming only Zionism as the enemy of the nation.⁶³ He therefore called on the youth to form a committee with representatives in Nablus, Jaffa and other cities to establish a newspaper that would demand independence for Palestine within Arab unity.⁶⁴

Al-Sabi's proposal approached realization in mid-May when the Syrian Istiqlalist Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli came to Jerusalem to join the staff of the newspaper *al-Hayat*.⁶⁵ As recently as the previous March, al-Zirikli had worked as director of the Syrian Information Office at the executive of the Syro-Palestinian Congress in Cairo.⁶⁶ At the beginning of June, al-Zirikli met Akram Zu'aytir, whose term of exile in Nablus had expired, and 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi. Zu'aytir was aware that al-Zirikli had edited the Damascus newspaper *al-Mufid* during the period of Faysal's Damascus government and felt it had been the finest and most widely read newspaper of the period. 'Abd al-Hadi told them that *al-Hayat* was in financial trouble and that it was therefore possible for al-Zirikli to take complete control of the paper, and with Zu'aytir as his assistant, make it a paper of importance.⁶⁷

In its brief life as an Istiqlalist organ, *al-Hayat* expressed the intensifying pan-Arab sentiments apparent among some of the educated youth by the spring of 1931. The journal's first issue featured an article by Shakib Arslan entitled 'How Do the Oppressed Peoples Become Strong?' This was in fact an abridged version of the letter cited above, which Arslan had sent to Zu'aytir.⁶⁸ For the four months from that time until the paper's final issue, it featured editorials by Istiqlalists and their immediate associates, and functioned as a voice of the Istiqlalist executive of the Syro-Palestinian Congress in Cairo. The articles dealt consistently with Arab nationalism and unity. Most significantly, they addressed the need to form a national party or institution on the basis of shared principles rather than on alliances formed in the pursuit of government patronage. Zionist observers believed that 'Abd al-Hadi acquired the paper in preparation for establishing a new political party, aligned with neither the Majlisi faction nor the Opposition.⁶⁹

'Abd al-Hadi was well prepared to assume political leadership. Born

in Nablus to one of the most powerful families in the city and its environs, he had received a law degree from the Sorbonne in preparation for a career in the Ottoman court system. He was a founding member of al-Fatat and, as mentioned previously, had served as personal secretary to King Faysal during his diplomatic activities in Paris. After the dissolution of the Syrian kingdom, 'Abd al-Hadi had returned to Palestine to establish his law practice in Jerusalem, and he remained close to the Istiqlalist faction.⁷⁰ By the time of his involvement with *al-Hayat*, he had long experience with the Arab Executive, representing the town of Jenin at the seventh Palestinian congress and serving with the mufti's cousin and confidante, Jamal al-Husayni, as co-secretary for the executive. In 1930 he had been a member of the Arab Executive's delegation to London. There he had spoken up for the Palestinian Arab students in the city who wished to meet the delegation, apparently seeing in their experiences his own as a young Arab nationalist in Europe and Istanbul.⁷¹ His new engagement with nationalist youth leaders like Zu'aytir exemplified the manner in which several of the first generation of nationalists, losing hope in both the Arab Executive and in British good intentions, began to work with the nationalist youth leaders.

The Istiqlalists' first criticisms of the Arab Executive appeared in the pages of *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* at the time of the appearance of *al-Hayat* and were spread over about two weeks. This was indicative of the fact that most of the Istiqlalists were aligned with the Majlisi faction, and, it seems, hoped that Hajj Amin al-Husayni would take a decisive position on the issue of independence. 'Izzat Darwazah, who had recently resigned from the Arab Executive because of its flaccid resistance to British policy, wrote a series of articles in the Majlisi journal, offering an analysis of where the Arab movement had gone astray.⁷² Darwazah asserted that the Palestinian leadership was concerned with local politics over pan-Arab affairs and sacrificed the principle of independence for the sake of consensus and compromise. The solution to the problem was the formation of a party committed to nationalist principles and to teaching them to the people.⁷³ Darwazah saw in the creation of locally oriented institutions an arena for the competition for power and, implicitly, empowerment by the mandatory authorities. If localism was a dimension of cooperation with the mandatory powers, then Arab unity was an aspect of independence. In this regard Darwazah explained, 'Palestine was never a

region separate from the Syrian lands. The people of Palestine were never a people other than the rest of the people who live in Syria particularly and the Arab regions generally.⁷⁴

Akram Zu'aytir, taking up the same themes on the front page of *al-Hayat*, commented, 'In the last two weeks the Istiqlalist idea has been appreciably active, which calls for optimism.' He noted that every political faction claimed to support the principle of independence, but none had been willing to work for it.⁷⁵ In other articles Zu'aytir attacked the Arab Executive directly by saying it was not a body of leaders brought together by shared principles but a forum for electoral haggling, concerned with the proportion of representation of leading families or confessional groups. Invoking the name of Shakib Arslan to authorize his assertions, he averred that if ten people in Palestine could work together on shared principles, not seeking government jobs or elected positions, they would have a great effect on the society because 'public opinion has lost patience with [the politicians] and has begun displaying its grievances on many occasions'.⁷⁶

Early efforts at informing, organizing and mobilizing in the spring and summer of 1931 took place against the backdrop of talk of Iraqi-Syrian unity and intensification of the struggle to move India towards self-government. The politically aware segments of the Palestinian public could entertain the notion that mandates and protectorates were temporary and that the borders they created and the regionalism they fostered were not irreversible. When the Iraqi politician Naji al-Swaydi visited the Rawdat al-Ma'arif school in Jerusalem he noticed that a student was wearing the *sidarah*, the peaked, brimless cap adopted by King Faysal's military officers in Syria and later by the Iraqi army. The student's headgear prompted al-Swaydi to comment on the feelings that bound all the Arab regions.⁷⁷ This was the spirit of political activity that revealed its fascination with the Hashemite monarchy and frustration with the Arab Executive.⁷⁸

The Protests of August

Although there can be no doubt that pan-Arab nationalism excited a substantial proportion of secondary school students, their teachers and a number of political leaders, it was local Palestinian issues that turned people out in street demonstrations organized by the activists affiliated with *al-Hayat*. The first of these issues, which must be understood in the larger context of the MacDonald letter, was the

government providing Jewish settlements with shotguns to be maintained in sealed armories.

The government had made the decision to install the sealed armories in the settlements following the 1929 riots, and its implementation had begun in secrecy.⁷⁹ However, in late June 1931, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* reported that British police were training Jewish settlers near Tulkarm to shoot.⁸⁰ The government chief secretary, Mr Young, sent a letter to the paper explaining that these were shotguns for defence only and that the policy was part of the reform of the Palestine police force after the 1929 riots.⁸¹ His explanation was of little solace to the nationalists or to Palestinian Arabs generally. Within two weeks, 'Izzat Darwazah issued a call in the name of the Arab Patriotic Society for a public meeting in Nablus on 16 July for the purpose of deciding a programme to challenge the arming of the settlements. Probably indicating a widening rift between the Istiqlalists and other members of the Majlis faction, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* published a notice announcing the meeting, but gave it no coverage beyond that until the event itself.⁸²

By *al-Hayat's* account, hundreds of people attended and they elected a committee of youth to call a congress to decide what stance to take on the government's policy. During preparations for the congress, the paper claimed that the youth of Nablus sought to make the city the stronghold (*ma'qil*) of the national movement and even referred to Nablus as 'the second capital'.⁸³ Although the congress was obviously organized as a protest against arming Jewish settlements, it also represented another step towards realizing the nationalist youth congress that Hashim al-Sabi' had proposed convening in Nablus six months earlier. On 31 July the Nablus activists held a general congress at the Arab Patriotic Society clubhouse, which delegations from many Palestinian cities and large towns attended. A large contingent of heavily armed police was visible in the city.⁸⁴ Akram Zu'aytir estimated that, apart from the delegates, there was an audience of 300. In his view, 'It was the first effort exerted by the Istiqlalist youth to set the cause in motion.'⁸⁵ This was also Hamdi al-Husayni's first opportunity to raise his head above the parapets since the end of his internal exile in Nazareth.⁸⁶

Although *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* reported that many delegates followed the proceedings with disinterest, others proposed launching a policy of non-cooperation with the government, organizing protests

and sending delegations to the high commissioner. 'Izzat Darwazah favoured non-cooperation, whereas Akram Zu'aytir recommended a series of demonstrations. Fadil Tahir of Jenin advocated forming a nationwide youth party. Dr Sidqi Milhis, another former al-Fatat member, suggested that YMMAs and schools establish sporting and scouting units to receive military training.⁸⁷ Dr Milhis had attacked the Arab Executive at recent gatherings for being traitors and called for the formation of an Arab political party analogous to the Zionist Revisionist movement. The congress ultimately adopted no resolutions of this sort, but instead passed a resolution calling for a general strike and requesting permission from the government to hold demonstrations on 15 August in Palestinian cities.⁸⁸

Two days later, an unsigned front-page editorial in *al-Hayat* expressed disappointment at the resolutions of the Nablus congress, saying it opened no new path for the country, but rather 'repeated the same old tune'.⁸⁹ Not surprisingly, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* expressed satisfaction with the proceedings of the congress.⁹⁰ More telling was the attitude of 'Isa Bandak. He was a Christian member of the Opposition, a youth organizer with ties to the YMCA and government, and the owner of the Bethlehem newspaper *Sawt al-sha'b*. In recognition of *al-Hayat*'s role in bringing about the Nablus congress, he used its front page to criticize the nationalists who gathered in Nablus. He challenged their authority to call congresses, strikes and demonstrations as they saw fit, pointing out that this was the role of the Arab Executive, which they were undermining.⁹¹

The Palestine government was alarmed by these developments and recognized the role of the press in them. As early as mid-July, its executive council had accused *al-Hayat* and *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* of seditious reporting and determined that trials of the editors were in order. The government's legal officers, however, feared that unless the judge were British, a court was unlikely to obtain a conviction; so, as in the past, the editors were issued verbal warnings. Frederick Kisch, chairman of the Jewish Agency's political department, tried to impress on the government the possibility that the public meetings and Arab press coverage could recreate the kinds of tensions that had led to the riots two years previously. Presenting summaries of speeches at the 31 July Nablus meeting, based on reports in *Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, Kisch urged the government to bring charges against the speakers.⁹² The government's chief secretary, Mark Young, then

summoned the owners of Arabic papers and warned them to stop mentioning the sealed armouries and any meetings on them or any other subject that could cause incitement. In response, the Arab newspapers went on a one-week strike beginning 10 August.⁹³

The Nablus congress was nonetheless able to elicit a supportive response from Palestinians as indicated by the fact that cities in the country went out on strike on 15 August. In Nablus, the strike was complete. Despite the government having denied permission to hold demonstrations, a crowd of youths gathered around the Arab Patriotic Society's clubhouse and in the markets. Police broke them up, clubbing some with rifle stocks. One person was hospitalized.⁹⁴ *Al-Hayat* ended its strike on 18 August with an expanded eight-page edition detailing the events in Nablus. It reported that the Nablus committee held a public meeting with hundreds present and decided to go out on strike again on 23 August. The committee delegated Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah and Akram Zu'aytir to travel to Jerusalem to represent the Nablus committee to the Arab Executive.⁹⁵

The office of the Arab Executive bowed to the pressure and met on 16 and 17 August. With Akram Zu'aytir and Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah attending the sessions, the members agreed to call a general strike and to lead a demonstration in Jerusalem a week later, when they would submit a letter of protest to the high commissioner against arming the settlements.⁹⁶ *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* portrayed Jamal al-Husayni as the most enthusiastic proponent of the demonstration, quoting him as saying, 'We must teach the people sacrifice. Gandhi was first to enter prison. Then hundreds of thousands went after him.'⁹⁷ It later became clear that al-Husayni was not anxious for the country to embark on mass civil disobedience. He nonetheless understood the context of the Nablus committee's resolutions. Three days before the demonstration, *al-Hayat* ran a translation of an article from Gandhi's magazine, *Young India*, which dealt with the importance of civil disobedience and support for locally produced goods, as well as the relationship of sectarian strife to imperialist divide-and-rule strategies.⁹⁸

As promised, the Arab Executive held a closed meeting in its Jerusalem office on 23 August with only 20 of its 48 members present. They decided to hold a second congress in Nablus on 20 September, this time under the Arab Executive's auspices. Then, led by their president, Musa Kazim al-Husayni, the executive's members went out

into the street where a general strike prevailed and heavily armed police were visible, and they marched towards the high commissioner's office to submit a letter of protest. Presumably, they were aware that they could not meet the high commissioner because it was a Sunday and he was therefore not in his office. Before reaching their destination, a British officer with ten soldiers confronted them, demanding that the politicians select ten from the group to submit the letter of protest. Having done this, the marchers dispersed.⁹⁹

In Nablus there was much more of a display of popular dissent. The city went on strike for three days and, on the evening of the 23rd, a number of youths and older nationalists held meetings. According to Zionist intelligence, they spoke of the need to arm villages near the Jewish settlements and elected a committee under Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim of Haifa to collect money to buy weapons.¹⁰⁰ Later in the evening, police detained Dr Milhis, thus provoking street demonstrations in the city. According to *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, about 400 women joined 1100 men in the streets. In suppressing the demonstrations, police shot and wounded three people.¹⁰¹ The police also raided the Arab Patriotic Society and confiscated its papers. In prompt trials conducted in Nablus, a court sentenced four people, including Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah and 'Adil Kana'an, to a year in prison. Some 30 other demonstrators, including a 13-year-old boy, were sentenced to three-month terms.¹⁰²

Despite the campaign *al-Hayat* conducted to mobilize Palestinians across the country, the only demonstrations were in Nablus. Zu'aytir wrote an editorial ridiculing the Arab Executive for its lack of support and asked if Nablus would have to bear the whole burden of the independence movement. He also directed attention to the notables who had recently attended tea parties for the departing high commissioner. He ended his column with 'Pro-government notables! Drink tea! But remember, it is tea mixed with blood!'¹⁰³ Between 23 and 27 August *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* and *al-Hayat* published detailed accounts of the events. *Al-Hayat* emphasized the completeness of the participation of the youths and the violence used in suppressing the demonstrations. The British authorities took these articles seriously, summoning Zu'aytir and Munif al-Husayni, owner of *al-Jami'ah*, to the police. They were warned that if they continued to publish such articles they would be placed under bond as prescribed in the Prevention of Crimes Ordinance.¹⁰⁴ *Al-Hayat* remained completely

defiant, calling on other cities to do as Nablus had done. The paper's last issue was published on 4 September, after which a court placed Zu'aytir under security bond.¹⁰⁵

The government ultimately showed leniency towards the demonstrators convicted in Nablus, abrogating the sentences of 27 of those convicted and permitting bail for four others, including Wasif Kamal.¹⁰⁶ The government was nonetheless forced to recognize in Nablus, as one official said, 'a centre of extreme Arab Nationalism [which] has become a focus for concentrated expression of Arab discontent and hostility to British rule'. He also noted that the initiative was passing into the hands of younger activists who were resorting to new methods of protesting against British policies. The Palestine government was reluctant to throttle public protests completely because it might 'stop down a safety valve and drive discontent into subterranean channels' or into mosques, where the government could not prohibit meetings.¹⁰⁷ The government also had to acknowledge the beginning of a pattern that intensified over the next few years: this was the role of newspapers under the editorial control of anti-mandate activists, articulating Arab nationalism, challenging the government's policies and orchestrating protests. As the press became more of a vehicle for activists in the next few years, the government refined its abilities to control it through its press bureau.

Only months prior to the Nablus demonstrations, the government had assigned the reorganization of its press bureau to R. A. Furness, former oriental secretary to the government of Egypt, and he submitted his report on the project just as *al-Hayat* had taken on the role of a pro-independence journal. Previously a branch of the criminal investigation division and haphazardly administered, the press bureau received renewed attention during the Shaw Commission's investigation of the 1929 riots. Furness asserted that prior to that time, 'The newspapers seemed not really worth bothering about.' It was his intention to move the press bureau from being 'almost exclusively inspective and repressive' to guiding the press in its responsibilities and making it a channel of government influence.¹⁰⁸ The demonstrations in Nablus compelled the government to rethink its attitude and to elevate the press bureau to a higher position on the government's scale of priorities. The Colonial Office soon offered the Nablus protests as evidence of the pressing need for the treasury in London to approve funding to hire into the press bureau a staff that

included Arabic and Hebrew translators. By the end of 1931 the bureau had acquired the first of its full-time employees.¹⁰⁹

The expansion of the press bureau was one aspect of the government's reflexive monitoring of an expanding – yet comparatively weak – public sphere in Palestine. It was not only the government that had to respond to the fact that, via the press, expanding literacy and public meetings, more Palestinians were entering what Habermas describes as 'the tension-charged field of state–society relations'.¹¹⁰ The Palestinian political elite also found it was increasingly required to adjust to a new mode of politics in which a self-aware and nationalist public expected to participate.

The Politicians and the Symbols of Resistance

As resolved at its 23 August meeting, the Arab Executive convened a congress in Nablus on 20 September to which 468 leaders and notables were invited.¹¹¹ Fewer than 250 and no leaders of the Opposition attended.¹¹² Thus, the orientation expressed there can be interpreted as that of the Majlisi faction and, probably to a lesser extent, of Hajj Amin al-Husayni. The proceedings must be understood in the light of Hajj Amin's attempt at the time to get the British to allow him to hold a pan-Islamic congress in Jerusalem within the next few months, as we shall see in the next chapter.

The issue of the sealed armories was all but absent from the agenda of the Nablus meeting. Instead, under Jamal al-Husayni's guidance, the congress dealt with an overall stance towards the administration. In a speech detailing the history of Arab relations with the mandatory government, he concluded that the time had come for a new plan based on one of two paths – Egypt's of temporarily cooperating with the British authorities, or India's of non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Al-Husayni asserted that the second approach was characterized by two degrees – obeying the law and violating the law. He concluded: 'I suggest that you choose the second plan and that you decide the first degree.'¹¹³ The significance of al-Husayni's position was that, although he employed the symbolism of the Indian civil disobedience movement, he responded to the militants in Nablus with what was essentially a plea to obey the law. This must have been highly satisfactory to the government, which did not need the Arab community's recognition, only its docility.

The congress endorsed this approach with some modification. It

declared that the Arab Executive would negotiate with the government only on the basis of complete independence within Arab unity. The congress resolved to encourage local production by supporting the Arab Executive's national fund, recently established to promote Palestine's economic development. It also endorsed boycotting foreign goods as much as possible. Further, it decided to convene a congress of youth charged with creating a Palestinian nationalist youth organization. Akram Zu'aytir was present at the proceedings, but had little to say. He was certain that the existing leadership would fail to implement its proclaimed commitment to gain the country's independence. It was therefore necessary, he believed, to form a group committed to a programme of civil disobedience.¹¹⁴

The nationalist youth and Istiqlalist challenge to the Arab Executive, and less obviously to the Majlisi faction, was expressed in the pages of *al-Hayat* and in the events in Nablus. One conclusion to be drawn from these events was that the youth could insist that the leadership make gestures of resistance towards the British and expect a response, if only symbolic. The increasing coverage of the Indian national movement in the Palestinian press and the legacy of Sa'd Zaghlul in the heyday of the Wafd influenced the young nationalists' conception of what an independence movement should be. The educated youth was an essential element in what could be considered the politically aware public in Palestine in the early 1930s. Although not numerous enough to be considered a mass movement, these young people had to be recognized as a swing force within the Palestinian political elite.

None of this was lost on Jamal al-Husayni. He was well aware that loose cannons like Hamdi al-Husayni, Hashim al-Sabi' and Akram Zu'aytir had been welcomed onto the editorial staffs of Opposition papers like *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* and *Mir'at al-Sharq* precisely because of their willingness to act as spoilers between the Majlisi faction and the mandatory government. For this reason, Jamal al-Husayni sought to bring the nationalist youth under Arab Executive, particularly Majlisi faction, control. His first step in this process was to direct the outcome of the planned congress of youth and ensure that it did not take place until after the Islamic congress.

In an article on the front page of *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* entitled 'What We Want from the Congress of Youth', al-Husayni stressed the vital need for united support for the Arab Executive. He claimed that

a youth organization operating outside the executive's purview was superfluous, if not injurious to the nation. He went on to cite India's Congress Party as the ideal example, claiming that it accepted the principle of '[the youths] distancing themselves from the factions in the Congress and its political disputes'. The Congress Party was united on the issue of passive resistance and, although there were differences of opinion, almost everyone agreed to boycott foreign goods. Al-Husayni elaborated: 'However, no organization of youth intervened in their differences of opinion as an independent organization, but rather followed the operative order about which there was no dispute.' He therefore recommended convening a congress of Arab youth that would unite behind the Arab Executive and its national fund and, most importantly, adopt a position of non-involvement in policymaking or in factional disputes.¹¹⁵ It was precisely this that the Istiqlalist faction in Palestine feared and opposed.¹¹⁶

About two months before Jamal al-Husayni published his article on the congress of youth, and as the activists were organizing their protests in Nablus, Shakib Arslan and Ihsan al-Jabiri again met King Faysal in Bern, Switzerland. Arslan told Faysal that he had been in touch with his colleagues in Syria and had assured them that it was unimportant to him whether the country was a monarchy or a republic. That was for the people to decide. The important thing was that no king be crowned while Syria remained under the mandate and that no constitution be imposed that infringed on the country's sovereignty. Faysal assured Arslan and al-Jabiri that he was of one mind with them on the matter.¹¹⁷ Arslan afterwards wrote to Rashid Rida that when Faysal left Bern for Paris he was prepared to ask for the throne of Syria. Arslan further claimed to his friend that if Iraq, Syria and Transjordan unified and formed an alliance with Ibn Sa'ud, then the Jewish national home in Palestine would collapse, as would Maronite dominance in Lebanon.¹¹⁸

King Faysal, returning from Europe, stopped in Jerusalem and met Hajj Amin al-Husayni just days after the Arab Executive's assembly in Nablus. According to the Zionist Agency's informant, the king told the mufti that he was eager for the unity of Syria, Iraq and Transjordan to succeed, and it therefore was not a good time to bring up the matter of Palestine or to aggravate the Jews. After the king's departure, the mufti met several associates and also 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi. Although some at the meeting feared that Palestine was about

to be sacrificed on the altar of Syrian–Iraqi unity, they agreed to support the union and to work for the eventual entry of Palestine.¹¹⁹ Soon after, Chaim Arlosoroff, the newly appointed director of the Jewish Agency's political department, recorded in his diary his sense that deep changes were taking place that could potentially challenge the Zionist movement, including the prospect of 'a Syrian Kingdom at our door'. But perhaps most significant of these developments was what he called 'a crystallisation of Arab public opinion' in Palestine.¹²⁰

Conclusions

The Arab Executive and larger Palestinian leadership's unwillingness to confront the British government after the MacDonald letter's publication impressed upon nationalists in Palestine the inadequacy of the country's existing institutions. The same held true for their view of the press. The conversion of the newspaper *al-Hayat* into an Istiqlalist organ was one of the first steps towards seizing the national movement from the Arab Executive. Through the paper, 'Abd al-Hadi, Zu'aytir, al-Zirikli and their associates sought to promote public opinion and give it a nationalist orientation, thereby putting pressure on the country's leadership to challenge the British government's policies.

Al-Hayat thus represented an innovation in Palestinian Arab politics and media. Previously, the activists had manoeuvred along the country's factional schism to gain access to existing newspapers and to make them, within the limits prescribed by their owners, vehicles for the expression of protest. In contrast to this appropriation of space in the papers of the main factions, the activists fully dedicated *al-Hayat* to the confrontation with the mandate and with the Palestinian leaders who refused to challenge its policies. The clearest indication of the importance of *al-Hayat* to political mobilization was the fact that the British authorities perceived the need to expand their capacity to regulate the press, which they had previously discounted as a factor in Palestinian Arab affairs.

By autumn 1931 it was clear that the nationalist message resonated most strongly among educated youth and secondary school students. To speak of shaping public opinion through the press is to refer particularly to these young men, as well as to a small but increasingly politicized group of women. Although the educated youth comprised a narrow segment of the Palestinian population, they read, contri-

buted to newspapers and were aware that the world of their generation was being organized into independent nation-states. The expressions of protest in the summer of 1931 were primarily concentrated in Nablus and involved relatively small numbers of people. Nonetheless, the demonstrations effected a change in the language and behaviour of the Arab Executive and especially of the Majlisi faction. This was evident in the fact that the Arab Executive convened in Nablus after the demonstrations. Jamal al-Husayni, who dominated the meeting's proceedings, was obliged to adopt the idiom of the nationalist youth and thus explained the executive's policies in terms of those of Gandhi and Nehru. His promise that the Arab Executive would sponsor a congress of youth at a time of the executive's choosing made it clear that the Majlisi leadership believed that the young nationalists had to be controlled.

In this period, there was no shortage of references in the press to Palestinian Arabs as a nation or a people. Even the most ardent pan-Arab nationalists employed such terms.¹²¹ Indeed, it was the diplomatic success of the Zionist movement and the government arming Jewish settlements that pushed Palestinian activists to seek support from the larger Arab world, particularly as Iraq approached independence and Faysal pursued a throne in Syria. Thus, the circle of political organizers associated with *al-Hayat* emphasized the pan-Arab and pan-Syrian dimensions of Palestinian national identity, believing that the question of Palestine's independence was inseparable from that of Arab unity. 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, 41 years old when an Anglo-French survey team demarcated the border between Palestine and Syria, recognized that colonial control rested on the bordered, centrally administered entities known as mandates and protectorates. These new units that divided the Arab lands relied on the compliance of the local notable leadership who found it in their interests to act as intermediaries between the citizenry and the government. Like 'Izzat Darwazah's critique of Palestinian leadership, 'Abd al-Hadi's bore the imprint of training for Ottoman imperial service and its distrust of the self-interested clannishness and provincialism of local notables. Both younger nationalists like Zu'aytir and those who were politically acculturated in the Ottoman system sensed that regionalism was closely linked to cooperation with the mandatory authorities.

In some measure, that trade and administration had long tied

Nablus and Haifa to Damascus and Beirut accounted for the identification of Palestine with Syria and the larger Arab world that was so characteristic of nationalist organizers in those cities. These cities' administrative subordination to Jerusalem was, after all, a British innovation. However, at least as important as longstanding relations with other cities of Greater Syria was al-Najah School in Nablus and similar institutions in Haifa, in which teaching Arab nationalism was a fundamental part of the curriculum. As we shall see, the same ideas were strong among activists, teachers and students in Gaza, Jaffa and other cities that had formerly been part of the Jerusalem *sancak*.

Modern national movements were not uncommonly also unification movements, as the nationalists in Palestine were clearly aware. Hashim al-Sabi⁶ explained in a 1932 press article that the nation (*ummah*) is 'a human society, the members of which share language, morals and customs, and who live in a specific land which is known by the name of the nation, as the nation is known by the name of the land' and that the Arabs constituted a nation. He further explained that the goal of Arab unity was for 'the Arabs to have an Arab national state, like the Americans, the Italians, the Germans and the other nations of the earth'.¹²² Like others of his generation, al-Sabi⁶ looked to the Western experience for the trajectory to be followed by the revived Arab nation in its quest for unification. His comments also illustrate how the activists saw national identity as something that needed to be explained and taught. These issues of Arab unity and nationalism forcefully asserted themselves during the Jerusalem pan-Islamic Congress of 1931, the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4

An Islamic Congress, an Arab Congress and the Istiqlal Party

The nationalism the young activists expressed at the beginning of the 1930s was emphatically pan-Arab with some pan-Syrian sentiments. In the atmosphere of imminent independence for Iraq and its possible unity with Syria, these two supra-Palestinian nationalisms were reconcilable with the activists' commitment to the construction and maintenance of an Arab national identity for Palestine in the face of Zionist settlement and state building. As the nationalists in Palestine sought support from a larger Arab independence movement, pan-Arab and pan-Syrian dimensions of identity complemented the Palestinian Arab dimension. Yet, some Palestinians were apprehensive that the country might be sacrificed to the Zionist movement in the interest of Iraqi-Syrian unity and independence. This concern was an extension of their consciousness that Palestine was the object of a colonial project that differed from those of other areas of the Arab Fertile Crescent. It was very likely also a consequence of their awareness of King Faysal's dalliance with the Zionists during the Paris peace conference in 1919. Most importantly, this disquietude demonstrated the manner in which pan-Arabism, in a different context, might be constructed as a version of identity in tension with territorial Palestinian nationalism.

A similar observation can be made about Islamic identity in its relationship with Arab nationalism. The two orientations, especially in their *salafi* elaborations, shared a common symbolism and functioned as mutually reinforcing expressions of identity. Muslim Arab nationalists portrayed Arab nationalism as a vitalizing agent for Islam and had seen in Islam a moral quality informing their nationalism. This had been true certainly of some of the prewar nationalists, and it remained true in the interwar period of Shakib Arslan and some

younger nationalists like Akram Zu'aytir. In specific contexts, Arab nationalist identity could also be set against Islamic identity and articulated as a contending basis of political association. It is as a basis for political association in an intellectual and cultural milieu of modern nationalism that Islamic identity can be drawn upon in a variety of politics known as sectarianism. Ussama Makdisi explains that 'sectarianism refers to the deployment of religious heritage as a primary marker of modern political identity', thus implying that sectarianism must be differentiated from the religious politics of pre-modern empires.¹ His research elucidates how the application of Tanzimat policies in Mount Lebanon destroyed 'an elite hierarchy in which secular rank rather than religious hierarchy defined politics' and by which the 'collapse of the old regime opened up the space for a new form of politics and representation based on a language of religious equality'.² Under the influence of the capitulatory system and the advocacy of European powers for their protégés, the reforms had in some instances created new channels of political representation that flowed along the lines of religious identity.³

The principles of religious equality and communal representation were even more strongly pursued in the British colonial rendering of modernity. It is well known that British strategies of control in India relied greatly on portraying the raj as a fair-minded umpire standing between hostile religious communities that shared little conception of an Indian national identity. Palestine, reflecting practices developed in India and other imperial possessions, was similarly administered as a collectivity of religious communities, with the mandatory government posturing as arbitrator among them. It is significant that the British advanced Jewish identity over Muslim and Christian by assigning it national, as opposed to merely religious, rights. Such was implied in the appellation 'Jewish national home', and the peculiar obligations of the mandatory government to the Jewish and Zionist communities of Palestine derived from this differentiation.

The government of Palestine, like other colonial systems, mixed an intrusive and impersonal bureaucracy with a system of indirect rule that rested on locally esteemed personalities in 'traditional' religious hierarchies, and creating them where they did not formerly exist. The SMC and Hajj Amin al-Husayni, as discussed in Chapter 1, were representative of this strategy of colonial control in Palestine. The creation of an institution on the order of the SMC produced resources

for which Palestinian political entrepreneurs competed, and it defined in religious terms a conduit of access to the government. Yet the council was also an institution set within an administration commissioned by the League of Nations. That administration was charged with overseeing Palestine's development towards becoming a nation-state, and Palestinian society, by the admission of the League's covenant, had proceeded far in developing the necessary institutions before the mandate was established. The rivalry among Palestinian politicians that focused on the SMC can thus be understood as an expression of politics of the sectarian mode.

Sectarianism in mandatory Palestine was not only a style of political advocacy, but for Arab nationalists it had also become a consciously employed and explicitly named symbol standing for backwardness and subservience to colonial domination. It was therefore used to describe an inferior alternative to nationalism. Consequently, sectarianism, as it was understood in the environment of a more fully elaborated colonialism, differed from the sectarianism institutionalized in Mount Lebanon's *Règlement Organique*.⁴ This distinction is implied in Gyanendra Pandey's assertion that 'communalism', namely sectarianism, 'is a form of colonial knowledge. This concept stands for the puerile and the primitive – all that colonialism, in its own reckoning was not. The paradox is that the nationalists have done more than anyone else to propagate its use.'⁵

In this conceptualization of sectarianism as a device of nationalist discourse in a colonial environment, one may understand how Islamic identity and Arab nationalism, despite their shared idiom and the past experience of reciprocal confirmation, could also be counterpoised as conflicting bases of political association, and Arab nationalism articulated as the modern, and thus proper, collective political identity. Both the sectarian style of politics and the nationalist deployment of the idea of sectarianism can be seen in the events associated with the 1931 Islamic Congress in Jerusalem. In this chapter I show that Hajj Amin al-Husayni organized the pan-Islamic Congress to enhance his standing among Palestinian Muslims and to mobilize world Islamic sympathy for Palestine, thereby strengthening his position in relation to the British. As a politician, he thus exploited the assets available to him by virtue of his status as principal intermediary with the Muslim community and as partner in the government's endeavour to be viewed as an upholder of Islamic

tradition. In the same period in which Hajj Amin organized the pan-Islamic Congress, the Istiqlalists, many of them affiliated with Hajj Amin and the Islamic Congress, organized a pan-Arab congress. One might ask: was an Islamic Congress insufficient in some manner in which an Arab congress was not?

Organizing the Islamic Congress

The beginnings of the Jerusalem Islamic Congress date back to January 1931. At that time Hajj Amin al-Husayni contacted the leader of the Indian Caliphate Society, Shaukat Ali, to send condolences on the death of his younger brother Mohamad Ali. Hajj Amin offered to hold Mohamad Ali's funeral on al-Haram al-Sharif and to inter his body there.⁶ Mohamad Ali had been an Islamic modernist with an ambivalent and complex attitude to Indian nationalism and a suspicion of nationalism generally. After an English-language education that culminated at Oxford University, he had returned to India to become first a civil servant, then an organizer of the All-India Muslim League in 1906. As a journalist a few years later he criticized the British war against the Ottoman Empire and endured a wartime internal exile for his stance. He emerged afterwards as a primary leader of the Indian Caliphate movement, organizing Indian Muslim protest against the dismantlement of the Ottoman Empire. Until republican Turkey abolished the Caliphate in 1924, Mohamad Ali and other leaders of the Caliphate movement formed a tactical alliance with the Hindu-dominated Congress Party to work jointly for Indian independence. However, the coalition came apart over the issue of preserving separate electorates for the Muslim Indian minority in an independent India. A working and personal relationship with Gandhi and Congress became one of embitterment and Mohamad Ali called successfully for Muslims to hold aloof from the civil disobedience movement of 1930. He died in London in 1931 during the first round table talks on Indian independence – a conference Gandhi and Congress boycotted.⁷

Mohamad Ali's political career illustrated how sectarianism circumscribed collective political action. Perhaps even more importantly for the issue of Palestine, the man whose body was laid under the Dome of the Rock was not a viscerally anti-British zealot and was certainly no venal colonial 'collaborator'. His body's interment in Jerusalem represented Hajj Amin's effort to tie Palestine to the larger Islamic

world through a man who championed its independence and unity, and who also admired British culture while valuing British amity.

The first session of round table talks on Indian independence coincided with Jamal al-Husayni lobbying in London and parallel Zionist efforts that led to publication of the MacDonald letter. The Ali brothers, like other Indian leaders, saw in the Palestine issue a means of gaining leverage over the British.⁸ Hajj Amin recognized the same prospect in cultivating the Indian Muslim leaders. He, as well as Zionist leaders, recognized that 'From the last quarter of the 19th century, Muslims had been regarded as a pillar of the Raj', but that support for Zionism and the persistence of the Palestine question made it difficult for Great Britain to maintain warm relations with 'a moderate Muslim lobby' in India.⁹

During Shaukat Ali's stay in Palestine for his brother's funeral, the idea of the Islamic Congress developed in conversations between him, Hajj Amin and other Muslim luminaries, including the Tunisian intellectual 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Tha'alabi and the Egyptian YMMA leader Dr 'Abd al-Hamid Sa'id. Among the issues they wished to address at the congress were building an Islamic university in Jerusalem and the defence of Palestine's Islamic holy places.¹⁰ According to Zionist intelligence, Hajj Amin held a meeting in late July to begin mobilizing popular sentiment on the issue of the Western Wall. He attempted to persuade activists to bring youth groups to swear fidelity at the Wall and was said to have written to Akram Zu'aytir, Hamdi al-Husayni and Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim on the matter.¹¹ However, this was the not the symbolism of choice for the young nationalists. The activists associated with the newspaper *al-Hayat* and the nationalist youths of Nablus were then directing their energies into protesting about Italian atrocities in Libya and the Palestine government's decision to arm Zionist settlements as well as promote the South Syria orientation for Palestine. The Western Wall neither became a priority in the pages of *al-Hayat* nor had it by any means been a driving force behind the events in Nablus in the summer of 1931.

During the planning of the congress, a new high commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope, began his term in Palestine.¹² A retired and highly decorated military officer, he came to the country from his last assignment as commander of British forces in Northern Ireland, and he had served also in India and South Africa. British officials in the Palestine government came to have little regard for his administrative

abilities and he was remembered for his rudeness to his subordinates.¹³ Nonetheless, he endeavoured to cultivate close personal relations with the leadership of Palestine's communities. Naomi Shepherd notes, 'No High Commissioner became so intimately involved with the Zionist leadership, repeatedly taking them into his confidence in a way he never did the Arab leaders.'¹⁴ This fact notwithstanding, he was nothing less than solicitous of Hajj Amin al-Husayni, convinced as Wauchope was that rapport with the mufti was the key to peace and public security. The high commissioner eventually went so far as to issue an 'order that letters from the Mufti were to be answered on the day of receipt and that replies were to be sent to him by hand'.¹⁵ Elevating the status of the Hajj Amin as intermediary with Palestine's Muslim community was a textbook example of the practice of indirect rule, and permitting him to hold an international Islamic congress was an extension of this policy.

In at least two meetings between Hajj Amin and Wauchope in late November, the mufti gave his assurances that he would not permit delegates at the Islamic Congress to discuss political questions, raise the issue of Muslim-Jewish competition over the holy places, or criticize Italian policies in Libya.¹⁶ Wauchope reported to Colonial Secretary Cunliffe-Lister, 'Mufti realises his responsibilities and expresses himself as most anxious to conduct congress in such a manner that goodwill between Great Britain and Moslem World as constantly preached by Shawket [sic] Ali and other notable Moslems may be enhanced.'¹⁷

Wauchope's colleagues in the Colonial Office, sensitive to the effect of events in Palestine on the attitude of the Muslims in India towards Britain, agreed with him that permitting the congress was advisable.¹⁸ Thus, after gaining Hajj Amin's assurances that the congress would not be used as a forum for attacks on Britain or other colonial powers, Wauchope consented to Hajj Amin's wish. The obvious effect of this was to rob the congress of any power to insist unambiguously on independence for Palestine or any other colonized land. A second factor inclined Hajj Amin towards the British as he exploited his office to gain ascendancy over his rivals: the SMC budget was in deficit because the world depression and two years of crop failure had reduced drastically the income from the tithe tax on *waqf* property. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* reported in July that the SMC employees in Nablus had not been paid for four months.¹⁹ The continuation of this

state of affairs contained the potential for destroying the mufti's most essential base of support. These circumstances gave Wauchope another opportunity to enhance his relationship with Hajj Amin.

A further set of restrictions on the Islamic Congress came from the Egyptian government. Prime Minister Isma'il Sidqi had in the course of the year annulled the Egyptian constitution, concentrated control of key ministries in his own hands and thoroughly suppressed the Wafd and Liberal Constitutionalist opposition parties. In Palestine, the Majlisi organ, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, was a tireless critic of the Sidqi government, portraying it as the instrument of British and Italian interests. The Egyptian government knew that the congress was a promising platform from which the Egyptian opposition could air its grievances. In addition, the Sidqi government had formed a close alliance with King Fu'ad and so was obliged to appear appropriately sensitive to the question of re-establishing the caliphate.²⁰ Despite the dissolution of the office by the Turkish republic in 1924, the caliphate remained a symbol of Islamic community and authority that was not restricted by spatial, linguistic or ethnic delineations. King Fu'ad had sought the office to enhance his position in Egypt at the expense of the opposition parties, but Ibn Sa'ud, having recently brought the Hijaz under his rule, had resisted Fu'ad's candidature because it implied a challenge to Sa'udi authority in Mecca and Medina. No less intensely, the Turkish government opposed the re-establishment of the caliphate because it represented a potential rival focus of loyalty for opponents of the new secular republican system. The organizing of the Jerusalem Islamic Congress provoked debates that reflected these competing and complementing notions of political identity. That the organizers of the Congress included Shaukat Ali prompted questions about whether the congress would serve as the forum for the nomination of a new caliph. The Egyptian government and others therefore opposed the congress.²¹

Early in November 1931, while the Istiqlalists from Palestine and Syria were meeting Druze rebels to formulate a united stance on Syrian-Iraqi unity, Hajj Amin focused on the Egyptian government's obstruction of the Islamic Congress. Hajj Amin's fellow organizer, 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Tha'alabi, assured the Egyptian government that the caliphate question would not be raised.²² Al-Tha'alabi learnt from Sidqi that the latter had conditions to demand in return for his support of the Islamic Congress: first, discussion of the caliphate

must be absolutely rejected; second, the programme of the congress had to be pre-approved; third, there was to be no discussion of current Egyptian affairs; and fourth, Egyptian representatives were to be appointed by the government.²³ Hajj Amin travelled to Cairo and briefly met Sidqi, submitting afterwards a signed letter meeting the Egyptian premier's requirements for the congress.²⁴ Thus, prior to the convening of the congress, Hajj Amin had assured both the British and the government of Egypt, which was under their indirect control, that matters that could inflame hostility towards them or other colonial powers would not be tolerated at the Islamic Congress.

Hajj Amin's co-organizer, Shaukat Ali, also displayed an interest in keeping anti-British tendencies under control. After his brother's funeral in Palestine, he travelled briefly to Egypt. There the Wafdist press criticized him for not visiting Sa'd Zaghlul's tomb and for not praising the Wafdist leader Mustafa al-Nahhas in his speeches.²⁵ Shaukat Ali later travelled to the Islamic Congress as part of the Egyptian government's official delegation. His tendency to lean towards the British in seeking support for the rights of the Muslim minority in India intensified after Gandhi and the British viceroy Lord Irwin signed an agreement that was to serve as the basis of negotiations on independence. Shaukat Ali denounced the agreement as a betrayal of Muslim interests.²⁶ Conflict between Indian Muslims and Hindus intensified in the same period, peaking in the particularly violent Cawnpore (Kanpur) riots in March 1931.²⁷ Shortly before the Jerusalem Islamic Congress, the Wafdist paper *al-Jihad* quoted Shaukat Ali expressing his willingness to support the British against Hindu pro-independence activists.²⁸

In contrast to Shaukat Ali's apparently increasingly sectarian and pro-British orientation, some Arab nationalists regarded Gandhi, like Sa'd Zaghlul, as a leader who could unite religious communities in a single nationalist independence movement.²⁹ Gandhi's and Zaghlul's names were at times conspicuously paired in the Arab press, and esteem for Gandhi had no doubt risen with his support for the caliphate movement. Despite a strong separatist tendency among some Indian Muslims and despite fighting between Hindus and Muslims, Gandhi, a Hindu, was given adulatory coverage in much of the Palestinian and Arab press, especially in the pro-Istiqlalist journal *al-Yarmuk*.³⁰ Unlike Shaukat Ali, Gandhi expressed his solidarity with the Wafdists and his respect for Sa'd Zaghlul. This shared headlines

in the Palestinian press with accounts of the events in Nablus in the summer of 1931. On Gandhi's return from the second round table talks in London, only a month before the Islamic Congress, Gandhi's ship passed Egyptian territory, producing a wave of excitement among the Egyptians, but the British authorities prohibited him from disembarking.³¹ These incidents were indications of the degree to which Arabs had begun to identify with Gandhi and Indian independence as a *national* movement beyond the realm of shared concerns of Indian and Arab Muslims.

Istiqlalists and Palestinians attracted to their programme for independence increasingly identified religious bases of political community with the sectarianism that enabled imperial powers to maintain their control. Subhi al-Khadra' had said as much in his 1930 article identifying Zionism as essentially an instrument of British imperial divide-and-rule methods as practised in India. The unsuccessful round table talks on Indian independence, during which conflicting interests of Indian religious communities prevented a unified stance, must have demonstrated to politically aware Palestinians the relationship of communal politics to colonial rule.

Nothing about the upcoming congress suggested it would be the place to demand independence for Palestine or any other Islamic country under foreign control. Because of problems with their rivals, neither Shaukat Ali nor Hajj Amin al-Husayni were in positions to complicate the lives of the officials in the Colonial Office or their local representatives. With the requisite restrictions on the congress in place, arrangements moved ahead and it became clear to the Opposition in Palestine that the most likely outcome was to be almost universal recognition of Hajj Amin as spokesman for the Palestinians.

The Nationalist Youth and the Islamic Congress

ʿAbdullah al-Qalqili, an Opposition leader and owner of *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, reacted to Hajj Amin's success in a manner that made it plain why Jamal al-Husayni was so eager to bring the nationalist youth into a framework controlled by the recognized leadership. Al-Qalqili's response also constituted proof that the two predominant factions had come to recognize the young pro-independence activists as a factor in Palestinian political rivalries. On 22 October, as the mufti contended with opposition to the congress from the Egyptian government and the Istiqlalists endeavoured to form a consensus on

King Faysal's ambitions in Syria, *al-Sirat al-mustaqim* announced that Hamdi al-Husayni was rejoining the paper as editor in chief. He had held this position just prior to his participation in the Cologne conference of the League to Combat Imperialism in 1929. The paper explained, 'No doubt the pro-independence youth who believe in Ustadh Hamdi's principles will increase their support for this newspaper, work to increase its distribution, and support it materially.'³² Introducing Hamdi al-Husayni's uncompromising anti-imperialism into the pages of *al-Sirat* in these circumstances provided two advantages. First, he enjoyed unassailable credibility as a nationalist not motivated by partisan loyalties. Therefore, the Opposition, some members of which had received subsidies from the Zionists and enjoyed close connections with the government, could associate itself with an authentic anti-British nationalist. Second, his strident criticism of the Majlisi faction's policies could serve either to expose it as a posturing and self-serving leadership or to bait it into a confrontation with the British authorities, damaging the relationship with the government upon which Majlisi power rested.

In his lead article in the first issue in which his name appeared on the masthead, Hamdi al-Husayni issued a direct challenge to Jamal al-Husayni's attempt to line up the youth behind the Arab Executive. He characterized the anticipated youth congress, for which preliminary meetings were then being held in Jaffa and Jerusalem, as a means of proving to the government that the Arab Executive had gained control over young nationalists.³³ His attack on Jamal al-Husayni and on the youth congress organizers was open and unequivocal. He referred to them as 'intermediaries of imperialism' (*a'wan al-isti'mar*) whose goal was to put an end to 'the radical independence movement' (*al-harakah al-mutatarrifah al-istiqlaliyah*). Such intermediaries were necessary, he explained, because Britain wanted Palestine as a military base and could only achieve this by appointing a class of people as its instrument. This situation required true nationalists to turn away from localism and towards Arab unity. Hamdi Effendi asserted that the 'so-called extremist Istiqlalist' idea was not confined to a particular group, but rather was shared by the whole nation.³⁴

Hamdi al-Husayni challenged the intentions behind the coming youth congress. He noted that, while the 20 September meeting of the Arab Executive in Nablus had resolved to negotiate with the British only on the basis of independence and unity, it had not drawn up a

plan of civil disobedience, which was necessary for the success of such negotiations. He emphasized that the question of Palestine was an aspect of Arab unity, whereas the Arab Executive was concerned only with questions of local partisanship.³⁵ He asserted that Jamal al-Husayni had never taken an interest in the youth until he perceived them to be a force in electoral politics and a means of political fund-raising behind the guise of the national fund. He also challenged Jamal al-Husayni's comparison of the Congress of Youth with youth in the Indian independence movement, pointing out that Jawaharlal Nehru was a true nationalist.³⁶ It was well known that the 20 September Nablus congress was a Majlisi affair and, although Hamdi al-Husayni never said it, there was no doubt that controlling the young nationalists via the Congress of Youth was first and foremost in the interest of the Majlisi faction as the Islamic Congress approached.³⁷

Articles in Cairo's *al-Ahram* and the Damascus paper *al-Ahrar* implied that Hamdi al-Husayni and other nationalist critics of the youth congress were communists.³⁸ The articles brought protests on behalf of Hamdi al-Husayni, including a letter by a group of AUB students and an article of support by *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*'s owner, Munif al-Husayni.³⁹ Hamdi al-Husayni felt obliged to defend himself and denied being a communist, asserting that he and his colleagues were simply dedicated nationalists.⁴⁰ In one uncharacteristically self-conscious article, he elevated communism to the level of imperialism as a threat confronting Arab nationalism.⁴¹ During these exchanges, the preparatory committee for the youth congress continued its work.

At the first meeting of the preparatory committee for the youth congress, the participants elected Hamdi al-Husayni *in absentia* to represent Gaza. He refused to accept the post, pointing out that even the resolution the founders of the Congress of Youth made to boycott foreign goods did not look serious: the preparatory committee of the youth congress had held one of its meetings in the German-owned Lawrence Teashop. Ibrahim al-Shanti also withdrew from the preparatory committee after attending two meetings. He explained that it had become clear to him that the goal of the congress was to put the British at ease with the nationalist youth movement.⁴² At the second meeting, 'Isa Bandak, the Opposition member and youth leader from Nazareth, recommended they confine the congress to the agenda decided by the Arab Executive. Some opposed this on the grounds that the congress should leave the agenda of discussion open to avoid

accusations that it was an instrument of partisan interests. Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah proposed writing a national pact to be voted on at the Congress of Youth. Though Bandak and others opposed this, a committee was formed and the document its members produced indicated that there was in fact a strong pro-independence element among the organizers. The pact declared the independence of Palestine within Arab unity and called for non-recognition of the mandate, of the Balfour Declaration or of any policy contradicting the goal of complete independence.⁴³

On the front page of *al-Sirat* Hamdi al-Husayni praised the preparatory committee's decision to jettison 'the reactionary idea' of tying the Congress of Arab Youth to the Arab Executive's agenda. He declared his opposition to the youth congress to be over when the committee expressed its willingness to reject the mandate and declare complete independence.⁴⁴ Although Hamdi al-Husayni had originally opposed the Congress of Youth and had openly confronted the Majlisi faction by portraying them as enablers of imperial control over Palestine, he did not oppose the Islamic Congress. Nonetheless, his articles on the front page of an Opposition journal that denigrated the Islamic Congress blended into the anti-Majlisi polemic that habitually portrayed Hajj Amin al-Husayni and his supporters as pawns of the British.

The Istiqlalists and the Islamic Congress

When the preparatory committee for the Islamic Congress was announced only a little more than a week before the congress was convened, it was clear that the Palestinian Istiqlalists were still close to the Majlisi camp. Five members of the preparatory committee for the Islamic Congress were a year later members of the 11-member central committee of the Istiqlal Party.⁴⁵ The Syrian Istiqlalists also participated in planning the Islamic Congress but at the same time had an interest in restarting the independence movement. This was because Syria's advance towards independence was barred by a situation that bore a remarkable resemblance to the situation in India after the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909. The French government offered Syrians limited participation in the governance of Syria through religiously and territorially defined electorates, conditioned upon acceptance of the French mandate for the country. High Commissioner Ponsot returned to Syria from Paris in late November

and announced that the government intended to hold elections in the coming December and January. These were to be conducted on the basis of the organic law of 14 March 1921, which divided Syria into 'Alawi, Druze and Maronite-dominated states, and a Syrian republic comprised of the districts of Damascus, Homs and Hama'.⁴⁶ Thus, there appeared to be a strong chance of the French creating a collaborationist government that would more deeply entrench the French presence, continue the partition of Syria and thwart unity with Iraq.

As the Islamic Congress approached, an informant for the Jewish Agency reported that the Istiqlalists watched developments in Syria in 'anxiety and anger'.⁴⁷ This situation was reflected in Shakib Arslan's treatment of the Islamic Congress in his journal, *La Nation Arabe*. It published, as might be expected, a notice for the Islamic Congress, pointing out that it would not deal with political questions. This was followed immediately by an essay by Ihsan al-Jabiri on the importance of Arab unity generally, and Iraqi-Syrian unity in particular. He specifically named King Faysal as the most suitable leader for this union.⁴⁸ This is further indication that even for Shakib Arslan, a late convert to nationalism who continued to cherish Islamic unity, it was the unified Arab nation that was required to deracinate the institutions of colonial control then being implanted.

When the Islamic Congress convened in Jerusalem on 7 December 1931 it brought together activists from the Arslan-Istiqlalist wing of the Syro-Palestinian Congress, veterans of the prewar Arab movement and 150 delegates representing Muslim countries as distant as Bosnia and Indonesia.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, in Damascus Ponsot announced that elections were to be held in Syria and on 10 December Hashim al-Atasi affirmed that the National Bloc would participate in them.⁵⁰ Riyadh al-Sulh, the Istiqlalist, spoke out angrily against imperialism in his 9 December speech at the Islamic Congress, while Ponsot met the Syrian leadership.⁵¹ In press statements after the congress, he and Shukri al-Quwwatli both emphasized their opposition to the elections in Syria. Al-Sulh added that he opposed cooperation in any form with the mandatory powers. He also used this as an occasion to express his belief in the inevitability of the unity of Syria and Iraq, though he separated this from the matter of a monarchy in Syria.⁵²

Inside the congress hall, tensions between the delegates who needed to preserve concord with the British and those who were pressing Islamic and Arab leaders to break with the colonial powers

were clear. The Egyptian government's delegation included YMMA leader Dr 'Abd al-Hamid Sa'ïd and Shaukat Ali, who travelled to the congress together and formed a small bloc within the gathering. The Palestinian Muhammad 'Ali al-Tahir, writing only six months after the congress, recalled the insulting, taunting remarks exchanged between the Egyptian pro-government delegation on the one side and Shukri al-Quwwatli and Riyad al-Sulh on the other.⁵³

On 11 December, during the ninth session, the congress considered the question of protecting Islamic holy places and formulated a resolution on the Western Wall. 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi tried to insert a rejection of the Palestine mandate into the resolution and was supported by Riyad al-Sulh, who emphasized that the real problem to be addressed was imperialism. The delegates began to discuss a programme of boycott and non-cooperation to be directed against the mandatory government. Shaukat Ali recognized that the proposed resolution would force him to choose between British goodwill and defending Islamic holy places. He therefore asked the congress to adopt a more moderate position, explaining that the mandates were not protectorates and would soon pass away, as was about to happen in Iraq.⁵⁴ According to al-Tahir, in a speech that shook the congress 'Abd al-Hadi exploded and pointedly asked Shaukat Ali, 'Are you one of the resistance [in India] and one of the occupiers here?'⁵⁵ It is indicative of the atmosphere that prevailed inside the congress that the resolution that was finally passed contained no rejection of the mandate or condemnation of imperialism.⁵⁶

From the pages of *al-Sirat*, Hamdi al-Husayni also asked the congress for an unequivocal condemnation of imperialism, not a weak statement with which the British would be pleased.⁵⁷ Early in the congress he sent Hajj Amin al-Husayni a telegram, which was published, directly calling for an anti-imperialist declaration.⁵⁸ Hamdi al-Husayni's articles throughout the congress alternated between carefully worded threats of damage to the delegates' credibility if they failed to speak out, and fig leaves for their relationships with the British if they did in fact sign on with the pro-independence trend.⁵⁹ As the congress formed committees and released statements, none of which indicated any displeasure with the colonial powers, he increased the pressure in his page-one editorials.

However, there were no overtones of partisanship in the articles. He portrayed the delegates, and chief among them Hajj Amin, not as

irredeemably dependent on the imperial powers but rather as leaders capable of choosing the honourable position. In the most impersonal terms, Hamdi al-Husayni described what an outside observer would consider to be British strategy and the place of the congress in it. In his view, the British sought to legitimate their control over Islamic lands by strengthening the position of servants of imperialism within Muslim circles. Thus, the British blessed the creation of a consultative council (namely the permanent executive of the congress) composed of their puppets. It was to do British bidding while leading the Islamic movement 'on the model of the caliphate', and had to be based in a location under imperialist control such as Jerusalem. This innuendo, of course, was clearly directed at Hajj Amin al-Husayni and Shaukat Ali. Hamdi Effendi further suggested that this could be construed to be a means of combating the Indian nationalist movement through the Indian Muslims: '[Britain endeavoured to] gain the Islamic world's sympathy for Indian Muslims and to encourage them to fight their brothers the Hindus, their own countrymen (*jildatuhum*), who demand the freedom and independence of India. That is to the benefit of English imperialism in India, because in the view of imperialism, India is everything.'

In a similar vein he argued that the Islamic Congress could be used to perpetuate British imperialism in Palestine at the expense of the Arab cause and for the benefit of Zionism. He closed with a respectful call to the congress to issue a statement rejecting imperialism.⁶⁰ The most significant aspect of this representation of the situation was that it tied communal-religious organization to imperialism, but nationalism to the true independence movement, whether Indian or Arab. Indian Muslims should, in Hamdi al-Husayni's view, act as part of the Indian nation rather than as part of a Muslim political movement. Likewise, Islamic solidarity did not necessarily take precedence over Arab nationalism, but in the relevant circumstances Arab nationalism was the preferable basis of association. His comments express the same reasoning that led supporters of Hajj Amin al-Husayni to move away from him over the course of the next year and to form an explicitly Arab nationalist party. The young activist's article also indicated why, during an Islamic Congress, the Istiqlalists would gather with other Arab nationalists and plan an Arab congress.

Akram Zu'aytir was not invited to the Islamic Congress, but managed to gain entry as an observer. He recorded in his diary that it was

rumoured that Hajj Amin had promised the government not to discuss British policy or to reject the mandate and imperialism. Zu'aytir and 'a group of [his] brethren' contacted five Istiqlalists, who assured Zu'aytir's group they would act but indicated that they would have to wait until the last two sessions of the congress.⁶¹ While Hamdi al-Husayni kept the anti-imperialist question before the public outside the congress, the Istiqlalist Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli submitted an anti-imperialist resolution on 13 December to the recommendations committee.⁶² Riyadh al-Sulh introduced the resolution during the final session of the congress. It stated: 'The General Islamic Congress condemns completely any kind of imperialism in any Islamic region because it is contrary to justice and the principles of the Islamic religion. It protests any authority that uses its influence and force to curtail religious freedom, or passes laws to convert the people from their Islamic laws and traditions.'

Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar, who was close to Hajj Amin, suggested the congress add the statement, 'The congress believes any Muslim who helps this authority whatever his status, is an apostate.' The resolution was passed in this form, suggesting that al-Muzaffar either intended to obfuscate the mufti's relationship with the government, or that the sheikh had a poorly developed sense of irony.⁶³ On the same day, Egyptian Wafdist 'Abd al-Rahman 'Azzam addressed the congress and denounced Italian atrocities in Libya; in response, the high commissioner ordered his expulsion from Palestine.⁶⁴

Hamdi al-Husayni reported the passage of the anti-imperialist resolution in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*. Yet, it was not to this resolution that he directed his readers' primary attention. Rather, he devoted the paper's front page to news of a programme for the immediate independence and unity of Arab lands that veteran nationalists had approved at a meeting in 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi's home, outside the venue of the Islamic Congress.⁶⁵ Al-Husayni left the editorial staff of *al-Sirat* immediately after the congress, his function apparently fulfilled. Although the Islamic Congress had failed to offer a forum for setting a programme for obtaining independence, the Istiqlalists had worked outside the congress hall for this purpose.

The Pan-Arab Congress

On Sunday 13 December, the sixth night of the congress, 'Abd al-Hadi hosted a gathering at his house of about 50 Arab political

activists who were in Jerusalem for the Islamic Congress. Hajj Amin al-Husayni was not present. It was one of several receptions that Palestinians held for the delegates during the Islamic Congress, but it was referred to in the scant publicity it received as an Arab congress.⁶⁶ Rashid Rida, the Istiqlalist members of the executive of the Syro-Palestine Congress, their Palestinian colleagues and a number of pre-war nationalists attended. An informant for the Zionist agency learnt from Sa'id Thabit, an Iraqi participant, that the meeting had been held at Shakib Arslan's behest.⁶⁷ The participants agreed to write a national pact that would begin a new stage in the Arab national movement. Consistent with the Arab unity programme Arslan had orchestrated, they resolved to organize a general Arab congress as the best means of achieving the goals set out in the charter.⁶⁸ Everyone at the gathering signed the document and swore to support it. It stated:

1. The Arab countries are an indivisible unit and the Arab nation neither recognizes nor agrees to any division.
2. The efforts in each Arab land should be directed towards the sole aim of complete independence, preserving unity and resisting the idea of contentment with action for local and regional policies.
3. Imperialism in any shape or form is totally contrary to the honour and the highest aspiration of the Arab nation and, therefore, the Arab nation should reject imperialism and resist it with all its might.

The signatories formed a Jerusalem-based preparatory committee to begin work on the pan-Arab congress. Initially including the Istiqlalists 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, 'Izzat Darwazah, Subhi al-Khadra', 'Ajaj Nuwayhid and Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli, it was soon joined by Asa'd Dagher, who, as a Christian, did not attend the Islamic Congress.⁶⁹

The establishment of the preparatory committee for the Arab Congress marked the shift of the Istiqlalists' centre of activities from Cairo to Jerusalem. The committee soon opened an office near Damascus Gate and approached the Palestine government to obtain a permit to operate.⁷⁰ The Istiqlalists in Palestine closely watched events in Syria. Meeting in Haifa shortly after the Islamic Congress, they decided to renew riots in Syria if the French appeared to be tampering with the electoral process. They also sent Sa'id al-'As, a revolt veteran, and Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli to Transjordan to give money to

Sultan al-Atrash and his Syrian Druze rebels for weapons. The rebels were to stand ready for the call from the Istiqlalists.⁷¹ With an eye towards French policies in Syria, the preparatory committee solicited support from independence activists outside Palestine for the pan-Arab congress. In late January, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli and Nabih al-'Azmah went to Transjordan to get leaders there to sign the Arab National Charter, which by this time had been published in the Arab press.⁷² The Syrian nationalists in Egypt associated with the executive of the Syro-Palestinian Congress also began to mobilize at this time around Arslan's Arab unity plan.⁷³ Rashid Rida informed Arslan in Geneva that he was meeting Syrian activists in Cairo and communicating with Nabih al-'Azmah in Jerusalem, who in turn coordinated with the activists in Damascus and Beirut. Rida enlisted Dr Ahmad al-Qadri, the Iraqi consul in Cairo and a founding member of al-Fatat, to sound out Iraqi politicians about their attitude to a unified anti-imperialist movement.⁷⁴

It is indicative of Hajj Amin's increasingly ambiguous relationship with the Istiqlalists that, though reportedly involved to some extent in these activities, he had not agreed to sign the Arab national pact.⁷⁵ The Palestinian leadership's reluctance to confront the British was also evident in the events of the Congress of Arab Youth.

The First Congress of Arab Youth

The First Congress of Arab Youth was convened in Jaffa on 4 January 1932, three weeks after the Islamic Congress ended. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* published an anonymously written front-page editorial a few days prior to the gathering of youth leaders. It reflected the position that Jamal al-Husayni had taken earlier that the youth should confine themselves to organizing the national fund, leaving policy to the Arab Executive. The article thus expressed the anxieties among the Majlisi leaders that young nationalists might initiate a confrontation with the British authorities as the mufti strove to convert the Islamic Congress into a permanent institution. No less telling was the fact that the Majlisi faction felt compelled to identify with the exemplary nationalist leader Mahatma Gandhi. The article noted, 'It was not long ago that in India a difference came between Jawarhalal Nehru, the leader of the youth, and Gandhi, the leader of the Indian independence movement.'⁷⁶

Gandhi, having recently returned to India from the second session

of round table talks, was then resuming his programme of civil disobedience. As Akram Zu'aytir recorded at the time, this was widely reported in the world press, including the Palestinian press. Zu'aytir made the life of Gandhi and the civil disobedience programme a topic of discussion in his classes at al-Najah School. The developments in India contrasted sharply with what Zu'aytir expected from the Congress of Youth. On the day of the congress he recorded that he held out little hope of the organization producing a serious programme for independence. The congress elected Zu'aytir *in absentia* to its executive committee, but when he learnt the names of the other members his suspicions about the congress were confirmed, and he rushed to write his letter of refusal.⁷⁷ Similarly, shortly before leaving his post as editor of *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, Hamdi al-Husayni also expressed his belief that nothing good could come from the congress.⁷⁸

According to *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, about half the 400 invited representatives attended the congress in a Jaffa cinema.⁷⁹ All evidence indicates that, though the congress was not Majlisi dominated, the faction at least made a strong showing.⁸⁰ The debates, as reported in *Filastin*, centred on the national fund, the encouragement of locally produced goods, and the boycott of foreign merchandise. This last issue proved especially divisive because of its threat to commercial interests. The decision to boycott was passed by a majority, but the delegates, largely representing an economic stratum that owed its existence to commerce with European markets, were quick to use this to attack one another.⁸¹ This debate overlay the Majlisi–Opposition schism that divided the congress.⁸²

Zu'aytir noted that Hajj Amin al-Husayni had been eager to ensure that the Congress of Arab Youth elect a president 'in agreement with him'. This was Rasim al-Khalidi, about whom Zu'aytir remarked, 'Though Mr al-Khalidi had no previous noteworthy experience in the national movement, he is among the best that could have been chosen president.'⁸³ In other words, Hajj Amin did not want a trouble-maker at the head of the youth movement but, rather, one who could restrain any anti-British tendencies. Al-Khalidi resigned from his position later in the year and took a government job, a decision suggesting that he was not of a strongly anti-mandate bent.⁸⁴ In short, Majlisi influence in the Congress of Youth leadership was substantial and the leadership was not initially inclined to confront the government. In March 1932 the Congress of Youth began to establish

regional branches known as Arab youth societies (*Jami'iat al-Shubban al-'Arab*). The first were reportedly established in Jerusalem, Lydda, Ramleh, Haifa and Jaffa.⁸⁵

While senior politicians endeavoured to restrain and co-opt the Arab nationalism of the educated youth, young nationalist activists immediately undertook to penetrate these organizations with a view to guiding them towards a pro-independence orientation. Shortly after the Congress of Arab Youth had ended, Zu'aytir's friend Wasif Kamal was released from prison, having served three months of his 12-month sentence for his part in the Nablus demonstrations, and soon took a teaching position at al-Najah in Nablus. By early February a fellow teacher, Mamduh al-Sukhn, had established the Athletic Union Club (*Nadi al-Ittihad al-Riyadi*), which these activists made the centre of their nationalist agitation. At the time, the Khalid Ibn al-Walid scout troop had its headquarters at the athletic union and al-Sukhn was director of both organizations.⁸⁶ The Istiqlal Party in Nablus later had its headquarters there and, more significantly, it was from where the general strike in 1936 was coordinated.

Wasif Kamal and Zu'aytir began a second organizational activity that paralleled the establishment of the Congress of Youth's local branches. The two discussed the experience of prison and the effect of this on prisoners' families who sometimes lacked even food because the prisoners could not work. No doubt with the example of Gandhi in mind, they saw how this situation was 'killing the spirit of sacrifice', hence hampering resistance organization. After discussing the problem at length, they decided to establish the Prisoners' Aid Society (*Jam'iyat al-'Inayah bi-l-Masajin*). One of the more significant aspects of this society was that it restricted membership to those who had been imprisoned for political activities 'and tasted the harshness of the English authorities'.⁸⁷ In other words, membership was confined to the most devoted pro-independence activists.

Zu'aytir and Jamal al-Qasim in the same period attended a meeting of the executive committee of the Congress of Youth to gain recognition for the Prisoners' Aid Society as the organization responsible for prisoners' affairs. During the meeting, Rasim al-Khalidi and 'Isa Bandak unsuccessfully attempted to absorb the Prisoners' Aid Society into the Congress of Youth. The executive committee of the congress clearly knew they were dealing with the same people whom Bandak had accused of attempting to take the leadership away from the Arab

Executive at the time of the Nablus armament congress. That al-Khalidi and Bandak tried to subordinate them to an Arab Youth Society branch was one of the clearest indications that the Congress of Youth was designed to restrain the nationalist youth who were demanding immediate independence.⁸⁸

In Gaza, Hilmi Mubashir and Khadr al-Ja'farawi participated in the attempts to establish an Arab Youth Society in the city.⁸⁹ However, the inspector of police, Raymond Cafferata, prohibited the organizational meeting. There can be no doubt that this was because Ja'farawi and Mubashir were close associates of Hamdi al-Husayni and had been among the leaders of the Gaza YMMA when it was closed under government pressure. They were also soon to be leaders of the Istiqlal Party branch in Gaza. As *Filastin* pointed out, there had been no problem establishing preparatory committees in other cities.⁹⁰ That the government blocked the establishment of the Gaza society not only evinces the level of discomfort the government felt with the society's organizers, it also indicates that mandatory officials saw the other Arab youth societies as non-threatening.

Organizing the Istiqlal Party in Palestine

In this same period, the Istiqlalists in Palestine began to organize their party as the Palestinian branch of the larger Arab unity movement and they saw the young activists as ideal resources for the new party.⁹¹ 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi visited Akram Zu'aytir shortly after the Congress of Youth and discussed forming the party with him. 'Abd al-Hadi explained that the goal was to form a party that would stay above the disputes dividing the Majlisi and Opposition politicians and to put combating the British mandate first.⁹² This non-partisanship was apparent when 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi met a group, including members of the Opposition from Haifa and Jaffa, in the house of Ishaq Darwish, one of the mufti's closest supporters. 'Abd al-Hadi spoke on the position of the national movement in Palestine and how internal conflict retarded its progress. He demanded the formation of a party that would put the obtainment of independence first, and he suggested that the party be affiliated with the general Istiqlal Party.⁹³

It was apparently because 'Abd al-Hadi was organizing a party to work for immediate independence and Arab unity that Chaim Arlosoroff decided to meet the Istiqlalist leader. Arlosoroff brought his colleague Moshe Shertok, who spoke fluent Arabic and, like 'Abd al-

Hadi, had studied law in Istanbul before the war. Despite warning glances from Shertok, Arlosoroff undertook to convince 'Abd al-Hadi that imperialism was not so bad. The latter's response was that Arabs and Jews had nothing to discuss because Zionism and Arab independence constituted a 'fundamental clash of interests'.⁹⁴ Arlosoroff countered that it was in the Arabs' interests to recognize Jewish strength in Palestine and to come to terms with it. He warned that 'reckless extremism on the Arab side' could lead to 'civil warfare which would mean distress and misery to hundreds of thousands of people'. Despite the adversarial nature of their meeting, Dr Arlosoroff afterwards noted of 'Abd al-Hadi, 'Here was a man who – all his inconsistencies in private and business conduct notwithstanding – was after all a zealous patriot, uncompromising in his nationalist outlook, whose father-in-law had been hanged by the Turks as an Arab revolutionary, who himself had been sentenced to death in absentia.'⁹⁵

Over the course of the next month memoranda circulated among the Arab activists about the organization of the party. Akram Zu'aytir observed that the veterans of the prewar nationalist societies and of Faysal's government in Damascus were at the centre of the movement. Zu'aytir's meetings and discussions with his mentor, 'Izzat Darwazah, also gave him a window into the shifting relationship of the Istiqlalists with Hajj Amin. Zu'aytir observed that Arab nationalist employees of the SMC found it increasingly difficult to reconcile their demand for independence with either their support for the mufti or their enjoyment of his patronage.⁹⁶ The Palestinian Istiqlalists' decision to defect from the Majlisi camp as Hajj Amin moved closer to the British was most likely made in the belief that they could count on support from a larger Arab movement, especially from the government of an independent Iraq, which was scheduled to join the League of Nations in the coming October.

Jerusalem as a Centre of a Pan-Arab Movement

In Egypt, Rashid Rida learned through his communications with nationalists in Iraq, Syria and Palestine that they were willing to put the Arab unity plan in motion and to work towards convening a general Arab congress. Among those expressing support was the Iraqi pan-Arab nationalist Yasin al-Hashimi. Al-Hashimi, a former member of al-'Ahd, was then a leader of the National Brotherhood Party (*Hizb al-Ikha' al-Watani*). Both he and his party were harsh critics of the

1930 Anglo–Iraqi treaty that defined the terms of Iraq’s independence from Britain. They objected to the provisions in the treaty for continued British influence over Iraq’s diplomatic and military affairs, for internal administration and for the right to maintain airbases.⁹⁷ Not much more did they like the fact that the treaty was signed in an atmosphere in which the ‘opposition was silenced, the press muzzled, and parliament prorogued’.⁹⁸ Apparently because of the support the Istiqlalists were receiving from the anti-treaty faction in Iraq, Rida wrote to Shakib Arslan advising him to mute his support for the treaty, which scheduled Iraq’s legal independence for autumn 1932. Arslan regarded the Anglo–Iraqi treaty as the best Iraq could hope for in the short term. He had been open about his feelings and Rida cautioned him against looking too pro-British, asking, ‘Didn’t you see what they did to Shaukat Ali?’⁹⁹

In late March 1932, Rida delegated the Istiqlalists As‘ad Daghir and Sami al-Sarraj to represent the Syro-Palestinian Congress to King Faysal and leading Iraqi politicians when the two flew to Baghdad to cover the Iraqi industrial and agricultural exposition for their respective papers, *al-Ahram* and the Wafdist *al-Jihad*.¹⁰⁰ In their meetings with the Iraqi nationalists, the two gained a commitment to move Iraq towards unity with Syria. Yasin al-Hashimi was among the most enthusiastic of the plan’s Iraqi supporters. However, as Daghir was warned, a stumbling block on the way to unity was that the Iraqi group included both opposition and government politicians. No less of a complication was the mistrust that existed between King Faysal and al-Hashimi. This mutual suspicion, coupled with al-Hashimi’s distaste of monarchy, could overshadow the shared enthusiasm for Arab unity.¹⁰¹ Despite these divisions, Iraqi veteran Arab nationalists – all former members of al-‘Ahd – formed a committee to cooperate with the Syrians and Palestinians.¹⁰²

Yasin al-Hashimi promised to meet the Cairo and Jerusalem organizers in Jerusalem within a month,¹⁰³ so Rida wrote to tell nationalists in Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo to build up al-Hashimi’s hopes for unity during his coming trip.¹⁰⁴ Sami al-Sarraj thus wrote a lengthy and admiring profile of him in *al-Jihad*¹⁰⁵ and ‘Ajaj Nuwayhid translated and published a speech by a British authority on Iraq’s promising future as an independent Arab state.¹⁰⁶ When Yasin al-Hashimi arrived in Palestine in late June, he and the Istiqlalists discussed the formation of a pan-Arab party and an agenda for the planned Arab

Congress, and al-Hashimi assured them he would take them under his wing. He was not insensitive, however, to the fact that pan-Arab activities were upstaging Hajj Amin's efforts to establish a permanent body for the Islamic Congress. When the two met, al-Hashimi told the mufti that the purpose of the visit to Palestine was to see him,¹⁰⁷ but the Palestinian leader had noticed that the visit had been arranged without his involvement and this became a source of resentment.

The Palestinian activists held receptions for al-Hashimi to which Hajj Amin and other leading Palestinians came, as well as youth activists in Nablus.¹⁰⁸ On one of these occasions, at Acre's YMMA, Subhi al-Khadra' gave a speech in which he stressed their enthusiasm for Iraqi-Syrian unity and for the concept of Palestine as South Syria. Addressing al-Hashimi before the audience he said: 'You were among the first working for the Arab cause, this cause that does not distinguish between Iraq and Syria [*al-Sham*]. I say Syria because we do not want to consider Palestine anything other than part of Syria, indeed part of the greater Arab lands [*al-bilad al-'arabiyah al-kubra*].'¹⁰⁹

After al-Hashimi's departure, a group of Istiqlalists gathered in Jerusalem and agreed to hold a meeting on the Syrian-Palestinian border, and to send a letter of thanks to Faysal. They dedicated £P 200 for 'Ajam Nuwayhid to promote the pan-Arab idea by establishing a magazine called *al-'Arab* (*The Arabs*), soon recognized as the Istiqlal Party's unofficial organ in Palestine. An informant reported to the Zionist Agency in early May that the Arab Congress organizers in Jerusalem had received more than 100 letters expressing interest, noting particularly a letter from Egyptian Wafdists.¹¹⁰ In the following months, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi and 'Ajam Nuwayhid wrote a great number of letters to journalists, politicians and Arab kings requesting support and money for the Arab Congress.¹¹¹ Although there was no public announcement, the Palestinian Istiqlalists had established their party by late July 1932.¹¹²

These activists' pan-Arab nationalist orientation seems particularly significant when one considers their relations with the mufti as he deployed the symbolism of pan-Islamic unity. The Istiqlalists and Hajj Amin al-Husayni exchanged memoranda on the party in the month prior to its establishment.¹¹³ But, despite the mufti's relationship with the Istiqlalists extending back to the time of King Faysal's Damascus government and having got closer during the period of the

Syrian revolt, the process of defining the party's relationship with Hajj Amin proved to be difficult. 'Aja' Nuwayhid recalled much later that Istiqlalists offered the mufti three alternatives:

1. That the mufti remain president of the SMC while the party is in constant contact with him, but that he follows the policy decided by the party. It was intended that the relationship be on the model of al-Fatat and King Faysal.
2. That the mufti resigns as president of the council and leads the national movement with the party behind him.
3. If he agreed to neither the first nor the second condition, then he would act independently of the party and the party likewise would be independent of him.

The implication of these alternatives was that both the Istiqlalists and Hajj Amin knew that if he were to commit himself to the independence movement the British administration would not permit him to continue as president of the SMC. The result of the negotiations was that the two sides agreed to remain independent of one another, and the organizers soon proceeded to announce the formation of the Arab Istiqlal Party in Palestine.¹¹⁴ This attitude of mutual tolerance quickly turned into one of hostility and, more significantly, the Arab nationalist basis of political association for the activists was decisively split off from the Islamic. The full meaning of this and reasons for it can be best understood by examining the changing relationship between the mufti and the British from the end of the Islamic Congress in December 1932 until the following October when the Palestinian public began to become aware of the Istiqlal Party.

Hajj Amin, the British and the Methods of Sectarianism

The British authorities' recognition of Hajj Amin as leader of and intermediary with the Muslim community in Palestine created a set of incentives for him to organize his constituency around Islamic symbolism. It is not surprising, then, that the Opposition recognized the benefits of a similar strategy. On 11 December 1931, during the Majlisi-organized General Islamic Congress, the Opposition held its own Islamic congress and elected as its president, Raghib al-Nashashibi, then mayor of Jerusalem and central Palestine's leading Opposition politician. The meeting took as its official name the Con-

gress of the Palestinian Islamic Nation (*Muṭamar al-Ummah al-Islamiyah al-Filastiniyah*).¹¹⁵ The Opposition, paralleling the Majlisi faction's permanent office of the Islamic Congress, created for itself a political association called the Party of the Islamic Nation (*Hizb al-Ummah al-Islamiyah*).¹¹⁶ The party in fact displayed few vital signs until its quiet demise roughly two years later.¹¹⁷ Of more importance are the names chosen for the party and for the Opposition's congress, which implied a tie between the world Islamic community (the *ummah*) and a Palestinian territorial identity. This nomenclature suggests the organizers' perception of the potency of Islamic identity both in attracting a constituency and in impressing the British with the Opposition's capacity for influence among Palestinian Muslims and the larger Islamic world.

The Opposition Islamic Congress resolved to end Hajj Amin's use of the SMC for his own political ends, emphasizing the debt and financial irresponsibility of the current council. The gathering thus demanded a new constitution for the SMC, government audit of its finances, new elections for its offices and, remarkably, the removal of the *shari'ah* courts from its purview.¹¹⁸ A delegation from the Opposition to High Commissioner Wauchope presented a petition outlining these reforms. During the meeting, Raghib al-Nashashibi asked the government to appoint *qadis* to the *shari'ah* courts, adding that a precedent existed for non-Muslims to do this and that British justice was 'universally respected'. At the same meeting, Fahmi al-Husayni, an Opposition leader from Gaza, requested that the government bring the SMC under the control of the Department of Justice.¹¹⁹

At one level, such steps would have constituted a return to policies that prevailed at the end of the Ottoman era when, as discussed in Chapter 1, the government centralized its control over *awqaf* administration and the *shari'ah* courts. But, at another level, this entreaty from Opposition leaders showed the notables' willingness to invite non-Muslim governmental intrusion into the most sensitive functions of communal self-administration for the sake of gaining advantage over their rivals and to strengthen their ties with the government. When Colonial Office officials learnt of this initiative, they were much more fearful of the consequences of government encroachment on Islamic institutions than were the Opposition notables.¹²⁰

While Wauchope was non-committal in his meeting with the notables, he was impressed that about 1000 people attended the

Opposition's congress. He reported to the Colonial Office, 'The Anti-Council party has had considerable success in organising public opinion, and commands considerable support amongst Moslems of moderate political views.'¹²¹ The high commissioner was clearly attracted to the idea of turning to a resurgent opposition to counter-balance, or even displace, the mufti.¹²² It was the question of precisely how much influence Hajj Amin exercised that concerned Wauchope as he undertook to reform the finances and administration of the SMC in the months after the Islamic Congress. Initially, Wauchope intended to institute an audit of *waqf* funds and to place the *shari'ah* courts under the authority of the Palestine government's judicial department, as Opposition politicians had suggested. He also gave a lot of attention to holding elections to the offices of the SMC.¹²³ Colonial Office officials, expressing characteristic conservatism and sensitivity to the influence of a religious authority, warned that interference with the *awqaf* and *shari'ah* 'might involve danger of a religious out-break [sic] fomented by the Mufti and his followers.'¹²⁴ Instead, these officials advised proceeding with reforms by way of negotiations, and with a reconstituted SMC if Hajj Amin proved resistant.¹²⁵

During summer 1932 it became clear that the high commissioner saw that Hajj Amin held more sway over Palestinians than any of the Opposition politicians, and therefore the high commissioner's interest in either offsetting the mufti's power as president of the SMC, or in replacing him, waned. Wauchope arrived at this position after letting it be known unofficially that he considered holding elections for the offices of the SMC. The Majlisi faction by no means welcomed this prospect, but accepted it with a degree of equanimity and set about raising money for an election campaign.¹²⁶ British intelligence reports claimed that the Majlisi faction fully anticipated winning any elections.¹²⁷ Raghīb al-Nashashibi, on the other hand, displayed his faction's weakness when he threatened an Opposition boycott of the elections if the office of president of the SMC was considered permanent and if the *shari'ah* courts were not removed from the council's control.¹²⁸

By late autumn, the high commissioner had allowed the idea of elections to die. The abandonment of elections was evidence that Hajj Amin was progressively, if gradually, reconfirmed as the preferred internuncio, bargaining agent and personification of traditional authority for both Palestinian Muslims and the government. In July

1932 Wauchope wrote to Cunliffe-Lister remarking: 'It is of great advantage that I work with the Mufti. It may be, in future, that this advantage has to be purchased at too high a price.'¹²⁹

This 'advantage' at the time was quite literally being 'purchased'. This was because Wauchope came to solve the problem of the SMC's bankruptcy in terms that reinforced Hajj Amin's dependency on the government. The financial state of the council, long unstable, had become critical because crop failures and collapsing agricultural prices in the world depression had forced the government first to reduce and then to remit the agricultural tax known as the tithe (*'ushr*). The tithe on *waqf* land, collected by the government on behalf of the SMC, represented perennially something close to 50 per cent of the council's revenues. In combination with chaotic accounting and misguided investment, this decline in revenues brought the council's budget into the red.¹³⁰

In March 1932, the mufti obtained Wauchope's consent to advance the SMC funds from the government treasury to cover the council's immediate shortfalls and, by late May, Hajj Amin had formally requested that the government replace the transfer of *waqf* tithes with 'a fixed sum to be paid by the Treasury to the Council'.¹³¹ Although the high commissioner preferred to cover the current shortfall with an interest-free loan to the SMC, he relented when he sensed that this would stop him and the mufti coming to an agreement.¹³² The agreement at which the two arrived, formally approved by the Colonial Office in January 1933, provided that the SMC received a lump-sum payment of £P 30,000 from which previous advances and unpaid taxes would be deducted. In addition, the SMC was to receive, as Hajj Amin requested, an annual fixed payment of £P 23,000, effective retroactively to January 1932.¹³³ Hajj Amin in return agreed that the SMC would limit expenditures, acquire no more private loans, provide audit reports, and pension off several older officials, replacing them with younger officials at a lower pay scale.¹³⁴ The negotiations left hanging the issue of whether to recognize some agricultural land as *waqf* property, as the mufti wished. The significance of this issue will become clear in Chapter 7.

On the face of it, this was a purely financial agreement. However, as a Colonial Office memorandum noted early in the negotiations, it seemed that 'the interest of the Government of Palestine in the proposed reforms lies mainly in the direction of curtailing the power and

influence of the Mufti of Jerusalem (President of the Council) whose intense anti-Zionism ... and unwillingness to co-operate with the Government has rendered him a source of anxiety.¹³⁵ One can only conclude that the financial aspects of the agreement were instruments of political control. Several other things must be observed about the agreement. First, it was secret, as were the negotiations leading to it.¹³⁶ Second, Wauchope intentionally refrained from embodying the agreement with Hajj Amin in a formal document, although the latter received a letter of notification.¹³⁷ Third, the agreement was of indefinite duration and the issue of elections for offices of the SMC was allowed to fade, having never been either formally scheduled or cancelled. Thus, the agreement was secret and personal and more of an agreement between two men than a codification of an institution's policy. Wauchope noted during the negotiations that 'the Mufti and I are on excellent terms, as indeed I am with his opponents.'¹³⁸ The confidential and personal nature of this interaction represented the classic practice of the politics of notables, and it reinforced the strategy of British administration that emphasized religious identification of Palestine's population. In this same period, as we shall see in the succeeding chapters, the Istiqlalists began nationalist, public and popular mobilization that not only contrasted with this mode of politics but also was intended precisely to disable it.

Hajj Amin's unwillingness either to sign the Arab national pact or to associate himself with the Istiqlalists' new party was a consequence of his dependent relationship with the Palestine government generally and the ongoing negotiations specifically. From the time of the Islamic Congress until the establishment of the Istiqlal Party the following August, the Syrian and Palestinian Istiqlalists remained closely affiliated with the mufti.¹³⁹ They were thus well placed to sense his concern for demonstrating his good faith to Wauchope, despite the negotiations between the two remaining secret. The Istiqlalists could not fail to have noticed that the secretary general of the permanent office of the Islamic Congress, the Iranian exile Diya' al-Din Tabataba'i, had a reputation for being strongly pro-British.¹⁴⁰ That the letters of protest composed at the Islamic Congress were not sent out until Tabataba'i took up his post four months after the congress had adjourned was no less of an indication that Hajj Amin was not eager to take the lead in an anti-imperialist movement.¹⁴¹ One of the most telling documents is a letter from Hajj Amin to Rashid Rida, appar-

ently written in January 1932. In the letter, Hajj Amin defended himself against Rida's suggestion that the former was becoming a flatterer of the British for the sake of the Islamic Congress, listing in detail the occasions on which he had stood up to them.¹⁴²

Further indications that the mufti was assiduously trying to cultivate good relations with the British administration came in reports to the Jewish Agency by Taysir Dawji, the Syrian Druze journalist who was close to the Istiqlalists. Dawji related to his contact that, at the end of March Hajj Amin had complained to him bitterly about an article in *al-Jami'ah al-arabiyah* attacking the mandate. Hajj Amin thought Dawji had written the article and told him that the high commissioner was holding him, the mufti, responsible. It was in fact the Istiqlalist 'Ajaj Nuwayhid who had written it.¹⁴³ The next month, Dawji showed to his contact at the Zionist Agency a letter from 'Adil al-'Azmah, an Istiqlalist leader in Transjordan, in which he referred to the differing orientations of Hajj Amin and the Istiqlalists. Al-'Azmah pointed out that this was the first time in which he had seen the Istiqlalists divided in their positions from that of Hajj Amin, about whom he admitted that there was no one like him in the struggle against the mandate and the British.¹⁴⁴ These tensions came to their culmination the following August when the Palestinian Istiqlalists established their party and parted ways with Hajj Amin.

Conclusions

In the summer of 1932 the Istiqlalists broke away from Hajj Amin to launch a movement for Arab independence and unity, and to form a political party as the Palestinian branch of the movement. This became necessary because the mufti chose to exploit the opportunities of a sectarian system of colonial control to confirm his status as recognized doyen and spokesman of Palestine's Muslim community. To the extent that the mufti was able to impress High Commissioner Wauchope with the scope and depth of the sway he held among Palestinians, Wauchope was willing to underwrite Hajj Amin's position by regularizing transfers of revenue from the government treasury to stabilize the SMC's finances. The relationship that the two developed was as much personal as it was financial and institutional. Just as significantly, it presumed a shared interest in buttressing a mode of politics that made religious office and authority a requisite for representing a community, and it defined the represented com-

munity by religious affiliation. Although Hajj Amin's strategy largely succeeded in confirming his leadership among Palestinians, it made him increasingly dependent on the government and, consequently, his interests diverged from the Istiqlalists as they undertook to organize a confrontation with the imperial powers in the Arab lands.

Their confrontation with imperialism was to take the form of a coordinated programme for Arab independence and unity. Therefore, the Palestinian and Syrian Istiqlalists, along with like-minded Iraqi and Egyptian nationalists, began to organize a pan-Arab congress to determine the details of this programme. The unity of the Arabs was to be an indicator of their independence, since it was the colonial powers that had imposed the divisive borders on them. But, at another level, Arab unity was a means towards independence because the nationalists perceived that the division of Arab lands into smaller units and the affiliation of Arab elites with colonial administrations were the principle media through which the imperial system was maintained. Whereas the organizers of the pan-Arab congress stated that the goal of the congress was to reject imperialism, Hajj Amin and the organizers of the Jerusalem Islamic Congress publicly announced that it would not engage in politics and, privately, the mufti assured the British that anti-imperialist invective would not be tolerated.

The symbolism and conceptions of political community articulated by the Istiqlalists contrasted sharply with those of Hajj Amin. Given his position in the sectarian system, it is hardly surprising that the mufti would deploy Islamic symbolism and appeal to the world Muslim community. On the other hand, the Istiqlalists and their pan-Arab nationalist associates articulated their conception of political community in the language of the architects of the League of Nations. In the view of the nationalists, the Arab nation – an inherently limited community in a way that a world religion such as Islam could not be – could realize itself in the modern world only in an independent nation-state and as an equal member in a system of nation-states.

Many of the nationalist organizers – both the veterans of prewar Arab nationalist societies and the younger nationalists – had been affiliated with King Faysal's Damascus government. Hajj Amin al-Husayni had shared this experience in his formative political years as a young nationalist and was closely associated with the Istiqlalists. But, in the postwar atmosphere of fluid political identities in the context of local Palestinian politics and within the structures of colonial

governance, Hajj Amin found his opportunities in his family's prestige and in religious office. His interests therefore pulled him towards the closed politics of notables and the religious expression of political community. The parting of ways of the mufti and the Istiqlalists, and the contrasting symbolism employed by each indicate the manner in which the blurred frontier between Arab nationalism and Islamic identity became more distinct in sectarian politics.

Even more indicative of the strength of nationalist identity is the fact that activists like Hamdi al-Husayni consciously came to identify sectarianism as a method of colonial control and to contrast it against nationalism. Significantly, he saw in the politics of India the model for this. Al-Husayni, like other educated English-reading young Palestinians, was acutely aware of developments in India that figured so prominently in the British and world press. K. Z. Aziz observes,

From the appointment of the Simon Commission [in 1927] to the implementation of the 1935 reforms Indian affairs were constantly in the headlines in Britain. Never before or since has India made such an impact on British public opinion. Newspapers flashed Indian news every day, learned journals carried frequent articles on the latest Indian developments, Parliament was busy in evolving the most detailed constitution that was ever devised for India, and scores of books were published on Indian politics.¹⁴⁵

By the early 1930s the Indian independence leaders had begun to reconstruct the narrative of Indian history around a conflict between nationalism and sectarianism, with the latter portrayed as a device in a British strategy of dominance.¹⁴⁶ That nationalists in Palestine adopted this construct indicates that the modular nature of nationalism permitted it to be transferred not only from the imperial powers to the people under their control, but also between anti-imperialist movements.

Another development in Palestine – the organization of the first Congress of Arab Youth – indicated the measure of the appeal of Arab nationalism. Although the Majlisi faction had staked its claim to leadership through the Islamic Congress and the Opposition had been quick to organize its own Islamic congress, both found they were obliged to adopt the nationalist symbolism employed by youth activists.

The Majlisi faction therefore initiated the Congress of Arab Youth in an attempt to demonstrate its nationalist credentials and to contain the confrontational tendency within the youth movement. In this shift, nationalism was revealed as a resource to be exploited by political entrepreneurs for mobilizing their followings and for competing with rival factions. In the same manner, the Opposition faction became involved in establishing the Congress of Youth and two Opposition newspapers featured the writings of nationalist youth leaders.

In the eyes of the nationalist activists, Islamic congresses, factional competition for religious office and a preoccupation with networks of patronage were manifestations of colonial control. For this reason, they believed the demand for independence required a change in the basis of political association. The crisis of confidence in the notable leadership thus produced identifiable fissures in the alloy of Islamic and Arab nationalist conceptions of political identity. In this context, the Istiqlal Party emerged as an explicitly Arab nationalist association for the attainment of independence.

Chapter 5

Creating and Regulating the Palestinian Public Sphere

The Istiqlal Party was established during a critical period for the relationship between the mandatory government and the Palestinian political elite. At the time, two issues demonstrated to nationalist activists the ineffectual nature of the policies the leadership pursued and the pressing need to confront the government. The first was Jewish immigration into the country. The number of Jews immigrating to Palestine in 1932 rose to more than 9500 over the 4000 plus who had entered the country the previous year. This was part of an upward trend that began in 1929 and reached a peak of almost 62,000 immigrants for the year 1935.¹ The second issue was the ongoing Jewish acquisition of land. Despite the Zionist movement's successes and assertiveness since the publication of the MacDonald letter, the Arab Executive had displayed a marked lack of resolve and a preoccupation with intra-Palestinian rivalry. Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who in the course of 1932 increasingly strove to enter into the good graces of the high commissioner as the two negotiated the transfer of revenues from the treasury to the SMC, also failed to come up with a decisive response. It was in this atmosphere that the Istiqlalists announced their new party, intending to take the crisis the country faced before the Palestinian public and to force the Palestinian leadership to challenge the government's policies on land transfers and immigration.

This nexus of relations among the Istiqlal Party, the Palestinian political elite, the government and the Palestinian public is the main subject of this chapter and will be further developed in the next. The party was part of a conscious transition from the secretive politics of notables to mass politics. What, then, was its relationship with the Palestinian political elite and to what extent was the party distinguishable from that elite? A closely related question is whether the

coalescence of the party was the manifestation of class antagonisms or a definable set of economic interests.

The Istiqlalists saw their role as directing and fostering the section of public opinion they understood to be defined by a belief in the Arab nation. Because the party was both pan-Arab and organized in direct response to Palestinian conditions, questions were naturally raised about what was meant by the 'Arab nation' and what was its relationship to Palestinian identity. A further question arises over what constituted the Palestinian public and how the Istiqlalists perceived it. Is it possible to speak of a Palestinian public sphere at this time? Or were there numerous separate publics, defined spatially as urban neighbourhoods and rural communities, or by literacy and access to the printed media?

In Chapter 1, following Jürgen Habermas, I referred to the public sphere as a realm of social life in which public opinion is formed. Habermas traced the origins of the public sphere to eighteenth and nineteenth-century German, French and English bourgeoisies and the expansion of printing, newspapers, market relations and new forms of associational life. The latter included reading and literary societies, coffee houses, salons, political associations and sporting clubs. As much as it was a set of institutions, the public sphere was also an ideal type produced in the collective imagination of the urban middle class. Thus, as Geoff Eley points out, the bourgeois reformers were products of broad institutional changes as well as agents of the change. These prior institutional transformations had not advanced far before intellectuals attempted to replicate elsewhere in Europe the public spheres they had witnessed in France and other western European states after the French Revolution. In their attempts to advance national consciousness, they began to establish newspapers and literary, cultural and athletic associations, extending these even into rural areas.²

The form and function of western Europe's national public sphere could be intentionally reproduced not only in east-central and southern Europe but also in the Arab world of the early twentieth century. Arab nationalists, informed by the western European experience, had models of the public sphere and populist movements to look to in constituting nationalist publics and public opinion. The Istiqlal Party was itself representative of new associations that were elements of the public sphere, and the Istiqlalists deemed it their task to construct

and extend the public sphere by promoting education, expanding and politicizing the periodical press, and holding political rallies.

Explaining the Arab Nation

The formation of the Arab Istiqlal Party was announced on 4 August 1932 with a declaration signed by the nine members of its leadership council, to which two more were added within the next few months.³ The founders elected 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi secretary-general, 'Ajjaj Nuwayhid assistant secretary and 'Izzat Darwazah treasurer.⁴ Much later Darwazah wrote that the founders did not want a president for the party, but felt a secretary-general was sufficient, thus seeming to indicate that 'Abd al-Hadi did not occupy a position of primacy among the members.⁵ 'Abd al-Hadi's law office in Jerusalem became the party headquarters and activists in Nablus, Haifa and Jaffa began to establish branches of the party in those cities.⁶

The organizers did not attempt to form a mass party. Instead, they viewed their party as a vanguard organization, selecting only principled nationalists for its membership, which attained a maximum of only between 30 and 60, all of whom apparently were male.⁷ The Istiqlalists undertook populist organization by striving to penetrate other existing organizations and to give them a clear nationalist and anti-mandate character.⁸ It is difficult to know with certainty at what point the party reached its peak level of membership, but it appears likely that it was close to it by the beginning of 1933.⁹ The party did not begin opening its regional branches until the following spring, when it took before the Arab public a programme of non-cooperation directed against the mandatory authorities.

In its engagement with the Palestinian public, the Istiqlal Party reasserted the primacy of Arab national identity against the sectarianism that proved so attractive to some of the Palestinian political elite. As in their press articles before the party's establishment, Istiqlalists and their associates characterized sectarianism as a relic of an earlier stage of social development. Nationalism was depicted, by contrast, as the proper mode of association for the modern independent state.¹⁰ Leading party members were committed and observant Muslims, influenced especially by *salafi* ideals, as indicated by the large number of Istiqlalists involved in the organization of YMMAs and the Islamic Congress. But the party's published programme made no mention of Islam, and of the 28 party members who can be identified by name,

three were Christian, one of them a party leader.¹¹ *Al-ʿArab*, the party's unofficial journal, drew parallels between Palestine and India, portraying conflict between highborn Hindus and untouchables and between Hindus and Muslims as rendering India pliant in the British grip.¹² Hence, in the Istiqlalist worldview, strength in the modern era was to be found in the unity of the nation, and Palestine could transcend its vulnerability through the unified Arab nation.

In its goals and ideals the Istiqlal Party was pan-Arab. Its bylaw defined its guiding principles as '(a) the complete independence of the Arab lands, (b) the Arab lands are a complete and indivisible unit, (c) Palestine is an Arab country and a natural part of Syria.'¹³ Thus, the new party in Palestine took up again the demands the original Istiqlal Party had made for unity and complete independence in 1920 and manifested them in the revival of the term 'South Syria'. In describing a party rally, a columnist writing in *al-ʿArab* commented, 'I do not recall since the occupation in South Syria – so-called Palestine – a popular day considered more glorious in its appearance or more zealous for independence than that witnessed in Haifa last Saturday.'¹⁴ 'Ajaj Nuwayhid referred to the 'real name' of Palestine as South Syria in another issue of *al-ʿArab*, and an unsigned article referred to 'this part of the Arab lands known in imperialist terminology as Palestine, and as South Syria in our Arab usage'.¹⁵

Yet, the party explicitly recognized Palestine as a political entity. Its stated goals included 'the cancellation of the mandate and the Balfour declaration' and 'the establishment of Arab parliamentary government in Palestine'.¹⁶ It was common to see both terms, South Syria and Palestine, used in Istiqlalist declarations. At a party rally in Nablus, the Lebanese-born Nuwayhid declared, 'Palestinian nationalism [*al-qawmiyah al-filastiniyah*] joins the Christian and the Muslim equally'.¹⁷ In Arab nationalist writing a generation later, the term *qawmiyah* commonly denoted the national identity of all Arabs, as distinguished from the term *wataniyah* – a national identification with discrete Arab regions or nation-states like Egypt, Iraq or Palestine. Nuwayhid may have been referring to pan-Arabism among Palestinians, and it is possible he intended to stress the Arabism of Palestinian territorial identity. But more likely, the usage of these terms was yet to be standardized and was still characterized by considerable plasticity.

It was with a bit more precision that Hamdi al-Husayni addressed 'the Palestinian Arab people' (*shaʿb al-ʿarabi al-filastini*) in a flier he

composed and published during his period of activity in the Istiqlal Party.¹⁸ This use of the term '*sha'b*' (people) in a nationalist and populist sense was not new; it had been widely used in nineteenth-century Arabic political and historical writing, but then only rarely to refer to local contexts in the Arab world. Early Arab accounts of the French Revolution referred to the French '*sha'b*'. In the second half of the century, the term occurred with some frequency in pairings with *huquq* (rights), *iradah* (will), *quwah* (power) and *sawt* (voice), thus replicating the terminology of western European socialist writing.¹⁹ Given al-Husayni's involvement with the Palestine Communist Party and with labour activism, there can be little doubt that this was his exact intention. In the pamphlet he referred to the goals of the people as 'complete independence for Palestine within Arab unity on the basis of the alliance' and 'establishing national [*wataniyah*] democratic government'.²⁰ His assigning the term 'people' nationalist meaning by qualifying it with the word 'Palestinian' as well as with 'Arab' suggests not only that he thought in terms of a Palestinian political community, but also that he believed his critique of the Arab Executive and its policies would find acceptance with a public that defined itself as a Palestinian Arab people.

Hamdi al-Husayni's use of the concept of the Palestinian Arab people is especially striking given that he had been one of Palestine's most outspoken and visible advocates of Arab unity for at least five years prior to the party's formation. In a public speech delivered during his tenure as a party leader, he remarked: 'The nation (*ummah*) is that whose members share in language, blood, history and customs. The Arab nation from Marrakech to the Gulf of Basra is one nation in language, blood, history and customs, despite the imperialists' claim that Africa is Berber, Egypt Pharaonic, and Syria Phoenician.'²¹ Unlike the anonymous writer cited above, he did not contrast the greater Arab nation against the idea of Palestinian territorial identity or include the latter concept with cultural strategies of imperial domination. Rather, he set pan-Arab identity against sectarianism. Indicating his perception of the atavistic nature of sectarianism versus the modernity of nationalism, he recalled that during his participation at the conference of the League to Combat Imperialism in Germany, one of his colleagues expressed amazement that Palestinians continued to maintain Muslim-Christian associations. Not insignificantly, al-Husayni made his comments at a YMMA under his leadership, on the

occasion of a speech there about the Arab 'women's awakening', given by a Christian woman, Mary Shahadah.²²

Despite being a branch of a larger Arab independence movement, the Istiqlal Party was a Palestinian association. Its programme referred to it as a 'national (*wataniyah*) independence movement'.²³ In the context of the declaration that referred to the factionalism and personal politics 'in this country' (*fi hadhihi bilad*) that paralysed resistance, it can be said with certainty that '*wataniyah*' transmitted the meaning of territorial patriotism.²⁴ Further, the party was registered with the mandatory government as a Palestinian political association, and all its members whose place of birth can be identified were legally citizens of Palestine,²⁵ even though non-Palestinian organizers of the larger pan-Arab movement were resident in the country.

It should be clear from the preceding chapters that the Istiqlalists employed the concept of South Syria as a way of tying the cause of Palestine to Iraq's forthcoming independence and the possibility of Iraqi-Syrian unity. The use of the terms South Syria and Palestine, even though there was no consistent formulation of the relationship between the two, was not a source of controversy either within Istiqlalist circles or in the larger Palestinian public. By the same token, the South Syria orientation was by no means wildly popular in Palestine. This is an indication that the notion of Palestine as an Arab political and geographic entity had by this time acquired wide acceptance.

The Istiqlalists viewed their organization as a continuation of the prewar Arab movement as well as the successor to the Istiqlal Party of the time of King Faysal's government in Damascus. Of the nine founders, 'Abd al-Hadi, 'Izzat Darwazah, Subhi al-Khadra', Mu'in al-Madi and Nuwayhid had all been members of al-Fatat, either before the war's end, or during the party's re-formation in Damascus, and 'Abd al-Hadi was in fact a founding member of al-Fatat in Paris in 1909 or 1911. In addition to these five, Harbi al-Ayyubi, a former Ottoman officer, had joined the Arab revolt, possibly after the British captured Jerusalem, as had Hamdi al-Husayni. Both joined the party's directorate shortly after its establishment. Dr Sidqi Milhis, leader of the party's Nablus branch, had been a member of al-Fatat before the war. Muhammad 'Ali Darwazah had been active in the Beirut reform movement and joined al-Fatat while in Damascus in 1920.²⁶

'Izzat Darwazah explained the party's relationship to the prewar

Arab movement in three articles in *al-ʿArab*. His description of the origins of the Arab national movement exactly fitted that put forward by George Antonius some years later in *The Arab Awakening*, which suggests that Antonius was reflecting ideas that already had some currency among politically aware Palestinians.²⁷ Darwazah saw the beginnings of the movement in the nineteenth-century Arab literary revival. He claimed that after the 1908 Ottoman constitutional revolution, a Turkish nationalist tendency in the government attempted to Turkify the Arab provinces and assert its dominance. The first Arab response took the form of Arabist societies among the Arab students, military officers and civil servants in Istanbul. Darwazah portrayed the 1920 fall of the Damascus government as the derailment of the Arab national movement and a betrayal by the Allied powers. The subsequent separation of Palestine from Syria was unnatural and contrary to the wishes first expressed by Palestinians.²⁸

Al-ʿArab published letters of congratulations to the party from the prewar nationalists Yasin al-Hashimi, Asaʿd Daghir, Shukri al-Quwwatli, and Riyad al-Sulh with an introduction surveying origins of the Arab movement.²⁹ The publication of the messages, clearly intending to confer legitimacy on the party, was further evidence that the Istiqlalists believed that the newspaper-reading Palestinian public identified with the Arab national movement.

Finding the Palestinian Public

The Istiqlal Party's explicit nationalism was not a novel development in Palestinian political life. The innovation lay in the populist methods the party began to employ and its cultivation of public opinion as a way of pressuring the Palestinian political leadership to confront the British. At the party's first public meeting, held in Jaffa, ʿIzzat Darwazah explained the importance of public opinion and its place in the party's strategy:

We, the weak and poor, cannot combat the imperialist, and with him the national criminals without the weapon of public opinion. ... When the country arrives at the creation of public opinion, then it will advance and attain its hopes. Therefore, the party feels that its greatest obligation is the shaping of public opinion and making it far-reaching among all classes of the people.³⁰

Darwazah's comments thus reveal his belief that public opinion was a fledgling phenomenon in Palestinian civic life, but one that the party intended to encourage and to extend to every social class.

His image of a social and political order being derived from a consensus achieved through public discourse seems to have been drawn from his knowledge of western Europe. The term he used, '*al-ra'i al-'amm*' (which is standard in modern Arabic), is a literal translation of English 'public opinion' or French '*opinion publique*'. The concept was not new in Arab journalistic or historical writing. Arab journalists had used parallel terms to describe events in Europe and Britain at least since the 1850s. These included *ra'i al-sha'b* (the people's opinion), *iradat al-ahali* (the people's will), and *aswat al-jumhur* (the masses' voices).³¹ At least as important to this concept's dissemination as Arab journalism was that it had long been propagated in Ottoman official circles. As early as the 1860s Istanbul intellectuals, seeking to emulate western Europe, expressed the need to cultivate public opinion via the press.³² By January 1914 the CUP government had begun to subsidize a Beirut newspaper called *al-Ra'i al-'amm*.³³

One can gain a sense of Darwazah's belief that Europe's history marked out the necessary progression towards modern popular politics from his school textbook *Durus al-tarikh al-mutawassit wa-l-hadith: murattab bi-uslub hadith* (Lessons in medieval and modern history: arranged in a modern style).³⁴ Chapters in the book included 'Resistance against the Tyranny of the Nobility', 'Struggle against the Tyranny of the Kings and the Establishment of the English Parliament', and 'The Scientific Renaissance, its Spread in Europe and the Modern Printing Press'. His chapter on the origins of the French Revolution depicts 'national writers' (*kuttab wataniyun*) like Diderot, Voltaire and Rousseau publishing pamphlets and communiqués criticizing the oppression of the 'the people' (*al-sha'b*) by kings, nobility and clergy. 'The common people' (*al-ahali*) began to read these publications and to see tyranny as the source of their misery.³⁵ Such ideas had also circulated among Arab intellectuals for some time. As early as 1858 a historical journal in Egypt described the third estate as 'representatives [*wukala*'] of the common people'.³⁶ The dubiousness of the proposition that the third estate represented common people or that many non-elites actually read the *philosophes* at the time of the revolution are secondary matters. It is more significant that Darwazah idealized an informed and nationalist public that was inspired by

liberal publications to assert its collective will against tyranny, and that he intended such ideals to be inculcated in the classroom.

The periodical press was one of the party's main means of constructing and informing public opinion. Three weeks after the party's formation was announced, the first edition of *al-ʿArab* was published under ʿAjaj Nuwayhid's editorship. *Al-ʿArab* was an illustrated weekly of typically 18–22 pages, published in Jerusalem with a run of 1500 copies per issue. Many of these copies may not have found their way into Palestinian hands because they were distributed in a number of Arab countries and reportedly enjoyed a brisk business with the Arab immigrant community in the Americas.³⁷ Though not claiming to be the official organ of the Arab Istiqlal Party in Palestine, observers at the time took it to be precisely that and the paper never denied it.³⁸ According to the first issue, it was intended as a weekly for all the Arab regions and 'the messenger of the pro-independence movement (*al-harakah al-istiqlaliyah*)'.³⁹ It saw its role as fulfilling a didactic function, informing people of the reality of the Arab nation, its history and its place in contemporary world affairs. Articles in the journal commonly dealt with Arab and Islamic history, Arabic language and literature, and contemporary world political trends. *Al-ʿArab* also explained and promoted specific policies advocated by the Istiqlalists in the confrontation with the British and Zionists.

In February 1933, Istiqlalists found another forum in the recently established Jaffa-based daily *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*. The party leaders persuaded the paper's owner, Opposition politician Shaykh Sulayman Taji al-Faruqi, to allow Sami al-Sarraj to become editor with Ibrahim al-Shanti as his assistant.⁴⁰ The arrangement reflected the appeal of Arab nationalism to Palestinian political leaders and its continued tie to a *salafi* outlook. Shaykh al-Faruqi had studied *fiqh* and other subjects under Muhammad ʿAbduh at al-Azhar University, had practised exegesis of the Qurʾan at the Aya Sophia Mosque in Istanbul and, before returning to Palestine, had graduated with a degree in secular law and learnt Turkish, French and English.⁴¹ Despite the pan-Islamic connotation of his paper's name, it was a pan-Arab nationalist organ. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah* gave the Istiqlal Party favourable exposure and carried articles by party members, including Akram Zuʿaytir and Muhammad ʿAli Darwazah. There are no circulation figures for 1933, but in 1935 it was reportedly printing 1200 copies per issue, placing it well behind *Filastin*, which printed about 2000 per issue.⁴²

It is difficult, even with reliable information on print runs, to know how many people the press reached directly. Certainly, single copies of a paper were passed among several readers, but other copies ended up as wrapping or toilet paper without ever having been read.⁴³ Also, even with the expansion of education that had taken place, only about 18 per cent of Palestinian Arabs interviewed for the 1931 census reported they could read and write.⁴⁴ Furthermore, elemental reading and comprehending a press article are quite different skills.⁴⁵

The census data should not lead one to take 18 per cent as the upper limit of Palestinians who knew what was being written in the press, nor can one presume that literacy was solely a skill of the urbanized few. As local and foreign observers of Palestine have noted, papers were often read out loud in towns coffee houses as well as in village communal areas.⁴⁶ While investigating the causes of the 1929 riots, the Shaw Commission reported 'in almost every village there is someone who reads from the papers to gatherings of those villagers who are illiterate. ... The Arab fellaheen and villagers therefore are probably more politically minded than many of the people of Europe.'⁴⁷ Veteran nationalist lawyer and amateur anthropologist 'Umar Salih al-Barghuthi verified this in a short piece of fiction published in *Al-Arab*. His story depicted a semi-literate peasant who passed on political news he picked up in the coffee houses of Jenin to members of his village and clan. As well as Palestinian and Arab news, they were able to follow Mustafa Kemal's activities in Turkey, Gandhi's in India and events in China.⁴⁸ Even if this degree of political interest were entirely in al-Barghuthi's imagination – and that would be unlikely – it nevertheless indicated the extent to which the Istiqlalists and other nationalists believed that popular political awareness should be viewed as normative.

It should be added, though, that many of the Palestinian Arabs who followed political developments must have understood them in terms of their own experiences rather than as people like al-Barghuthi or Darwazah saw them. The peasants of Uttar Pradesh in India in the early 1920s displayed little interest in the theory of *swaraj* and not infrequently understood Gandhi as a miracle worker or avatar of the divine. Yet, this in no way lessened either the political importance that they associated with his name or the links with other Indians that they formed through its invocation.⁴⁹ The same has been observed of Kenya's Mau Mau revolt of 1952. The fighters in this

localized revolt who expressed their solidarity through oaths and initiation rites, seem to have never expressed or understood the pan-African nationalism of Jomo Kenyatta, but nevertheless acted in his name and imagined he supported their movement.⁵⁰

In a Palestinian rural village, anyone who transmitted news, knowing that newspapers were inaccessible to many of the audience, had the freedom to refashion it to suit his or her own intents.⁵¹ Individuals in such settings probably displayed their knowledge of events or their mastery of reading as much to gain advantage or confirm their status in local and momentary contexts as to engage their listeners in national issues. This, however, did not negate the politicizing effect of transmitting news orally, as Robert Weir notes about the role of the press in colonial Virginia during the events leading up to the American Revolution. He points out that an individual's knowledge of even trivial events in Europe, gained by privileged access to media, had the effect of authorizing leadership.⁵² Thus, 'the restricted circulation of newspapers may have actually had the paradoxical effect of increasing their influence upon the population at large.'⁵³ Needless to say, this does not imply that the potential for political mobilization is inversely related to literacy or access to the media. It suggests instead how modernist educations and nationalist worldviews could actually intensify activists' influence in the much larger, non-elite population. Even in industrialized societies with high rates of literacy, there is evidence that transmission of information from the media by interpersonal contact influences attitudes and behaviour more than news gained directly from the media.⁵⁴

No less significant than that the press reached its consumers in far corners of Palestine was that events in the most distant parts of the country, as well as elsewhere in the world, were quickly reported in the newspapers of Jaffa, Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Haifa. This was in large measure because investments in telecommunications made by the Palestine government and private concessionaires benefited the Palestinian press. The British military administration in Palestine rapidly rebuilt and expanded the telegraph system after the Ottoman government's lines were completely destroyed during the war. By 1920 the new system had linked all the major Palestinian towns and cities as well as some rural areas.⁵⁵ The mandatory government also established a public telephone service, which had not existed in the Ottoman period. In 1924, more than 250,000 telegrams were sent in

Palestine, which was a small number compared with the transmission of 7,400,000 local calls and 316,000 trunk calls that year. There were at the time 1816 telephones in use. In 1934, the number of telegrams sent for the year increased to 399,000. The phone system that year carried 27,795,200 local telephone calls and 1,153,819 trunk calls. By then, the number of telephones in use had reached 8123.⁵⁶ Most of the increase in telephones and calls was probably because Jewish immigrants coming to the country expected to use telephones and had the means to buy them. The steep upturn in the number of telephones in the mixed areas of Tel Aviv-Jaffa and Haifa during 1932 bears this out. However, even in 1928, when immigration was low, the number of telephones in use grew by 14 per cent.⁵⁷ The predominantly Arab rural areas also had access to telephones in the post offices, all of which contained public phones by 1921. Two years later there were 30 post offices in the country and a phone service had been established to Egypt, as was service to Syria at some point prior to 1929.⁵⁸ Newspapers, among them *al-Jamī'ah al-Islamiyah*, featured sections billed as special news received by telephone or press wire.⁵⁹ These same telecommunications services soon facilitated coordination between national committees that organized strikes and demonstrations and thus thoroughly changed the relationship between the political leadership and the larger Palestinian Arab population.

The advance of telecommunications built on other significant developments that were identifiable from the beginning of the twentieth century, such as the clock towers the Ottoman government erected in 1900 in Jaffa, Jerusalem, Nazareth and other cities. The state built these to commemorate the twenty-fifth year of Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid's rule, evidently intending to associate his reign with the formation of community by ordering people's activities across space and time.⁶⁰ Arguably, Palestinian Arabs in the same period acted on the example of non-Arabs among them by increasingly posting Arabic informational signs and commercial advertisements in cities. The employment of such public texts to augment personal knowledge and its oral transmission thus complemented the developing Arabic press in the expansion of a print community.⁶¹

At least two other institutions that supported a public sphere in Palestine that Habermas had identified as having been characteristic of the same development in western Europe were coffee houses and theatres, though in Palestine these were cinemas. The coffee houses

functioned in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Great Britain and France, along with private salons, as 'centers of criticism – literary at first, then also political'.⁶² The coffee houses in Palestine seem to have changed in character at the beginning of the twentieth century, a fact that was related to other transformations in urban organization. 'Izzat Darwazah describes in his memoirs the *diwans* of the leading families of Nablus at the turn of the century. A *diwan* is an area of the house set apart from the family living areas comprising a large hall with adjoining rooms in which the notables held soirées with their friends, among them the less wealthy merchants. By Darwazah's account, the conversations in these large gatherings tended towards business, gossip and entertaining stories, but rarely did participants broach political topics. In contrast to the *diwans* of the notables, the city's coffee houses were roughly furnished, dirty and frequently located in dark corners of neighbourhoods; they attracted workers, the poor and those whom Darwazah describes simply as 'the youth'.⁶³

In the first decade of the twentieth century, an innovation was observed in Nablus – new, conspicuously cleaner coffee houses, several of them in the centre of the city. To these were attracted members of what Darwazah terms 'the educated middle class', as well as members of the notable families. Like two Ottoman officials describing the same development in 1916, Darwazah associated the creation of the new locales of public interaction with the passing of old '*diwan* life'.⁶⁴ By that time, cities like Cairo, Beirut, Jaffa and Jerusalem had seen the establishment of literary coffee houses in which not only did patrons listen to readings from the press, but journalists and literati met, discussed public affairs, composed articles and edited copy.⁶⁵ Fulfilling some of the same functions as the new style of coffee houses were public reading rooms offering books and periodicals. These appeared in Palestinian towns and cities apparently for the first time during the war. Established by the British military administration for the dissemination of propaganda, Palestinians received them enthusiastically. Although these closed at the end of the war, athletic and cultural clubs, in addition to some bookstores, soon featured their own reading rooms.⁶⁶ When the Jaffa branch of the Istiqlal Party opened its clubhouse in May 1933, it followed this trend by providing such a room.⁶⁷

Shortly after the appearance of the new coffee houses in Nablus, the city established a park known as al-Manshiyah. With the park, the

municipality built a public hall in which cinematic films were shown. On the hall's stage, students performed plays, the first of them based on the life of the pre-Islamic Arab poet Imru al-Qays and staged shortly after the revolution of 1909.⁶⁸ Nablus, by reputation, was the least cosmopolitan of Palestine's cities and probably one of the last to be affected by such trends as the coming of cinemas and coffee houses intended for the middle and upper classes. By the 1930s cinemas serving Arab audiences were commonplace in the cities of Palestine, though no Arab film was produced until 1935.⁶⁹ As seen in the preceding chapters, coffee houses and cinemas also became important venues for political debate and organization. It is suggestive of the manner in which the Istiqlalists were participants in the institutional changes underlying the expanding public sphere that Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim was among several investors who formed an Arab film company in 1934, intending to establish new cinemas in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Haifa and Amman.⁷⁰

From the time of the 1931 armament congress in Nablus through to the general strike of 1936, a pattern emerged and intensified: Arab nationalists, affiliated with at least one pro-independence newspaper, established city and town-based committees, held public rallies, and coordinated strikes and demonstrations. They thus structured and employed public opinion to force the Palestinian political elite to adopt the idiom of Arab nationalism and to confront the mandatory government on its policies.

The Istiqlal Party and the Political Elite

The Istiqlal Party intended to change the Palestinian political leadership's relationship with the British. This was evident in the party's programme and in an *al-'Arab* article in which Subhi al-Khadra' set out the reasons for creating the party. He explained how the party aimed to counter the factionalism and self-interest of Palestinian politicians, which had paralysed the Palestinian national movement and left it without direction. Taking up a theme that he and other Istiqlalists had raised earlier, al-Khadra' asserted that the national movement had deviated from the struggle against imperialism, replacing it with periodic outbursts against Zionism. It was, in his view, British imperialism that most deprived Palestinians of their freedom, with Zionism merely one of imperialism's manifestations.⁷¹ Referring to an incident in 1931 when the Arab Executive called on Arabs to boycott

Chaim Weizmann during his visit to Palestine, al-Khadra' asked why it was more acceptable for rural and urban notables to attend the banquets sponsored by the British government, which he viewed as the 'true usurper of the rights of the land'.⁷²

By challenging the Palestinian leadership for its collaboration with British authorities, al-Khadra' called into question the fundamental principals underlying colonial control and the politics of notables. However, the party intended to force the existing leadership effectively to lead an independence movement, not to destroy the Palestinian elite as a social class or status group. In this regard, party declarations defined no plan for social change, either reformist or radical; the party by-law only referred vaguely to 'reviving the country politically, economically, and socially'.⁷³ Issues of class and social reform were not, however, entirely absent from the pages of *al-Arab* and other Istiqlalist publications. The party's rebuttal to the high commissioner's 1932 report to the League of Nations accused the Palestine government of scandalous neglect of the peasants' desperate poverty and debt.⁷⁴ The peasant issue had appeal as a way of discrediting the British before the League of Nations, but the Istiqlalists must have been aware that the Palestinian political leadership was hardly innocent of exploiting the peasants. In all probability, the party members recognized that this issue could prove sufficiently divisive of the political elite to wreck any unified programme for independence.

It has been suggested that the party represented an embryonic 'national bourgeoisie' that began to compete with the notable leadership. It thus 'attempted to mobilize the popular classes along the faultlines [sic] of class antagonisms by constructing a popular-democratic discourse that took advantage of fellahin disaffection from the notables and used it for "national" purposes'.⁷⁵ Such a view is consonant with an instrumentalist interpretation of nationalism that understands it as ideology. This thesis is attractive and not unreasonable, but it is not well supported by any sources. Indeed, what is striking is that the Istiqlal Party paid so little attention to the deepening class antagonisms of the period and that it was so slow to exploit them. There were a few examples of exceptions. 'Izzat Darwazah, writing in *al-Arab*, harshly criticized an article in another paper whose author claimed that the programme of the Palestinian national movement should be determined by 'those with true interests' (*ashab al-masalih al-haqiqiyah*). Darwazah castigated the use

of the term as an imperialist creation and remnant of the 'feudal period', and he claimed that it represented an attempt to maintain the status of capitalist and feudal elites at the expense of workers, peasants and the middle class.⁷⁶ Hamdi al-Husayni's critique of the seventh Palestinian Arab Congress characterized it as 'reactionary' and 'far from democratic', representing only 'the class of the *dhawat* and the rich'.⁷⁷ However, discussion of this sort was rare on the pages of *al-'Arab* and in other Istiqlalist publications.⁷⁸

As we saw in the last chapter, the formation of the party's leadership committee was, in some measure, a secession from within the ranks of the Majlisi faction, a fact noted by contemporary observers.⁷⁹ Consistent with this was *Filastin's* remark, with only a little exaggeration, that the nine signatories to the party's programme were long-standing members of the very institutions they justly criticized. The editorial predicted that, despite the country's readiness to revolt against the *status quo*, nothing was likely to change.⁸⁰ In addition to several veteran Istiqlalists having been aligned with Hajj Amin al-Husayni, seven of the party's 11-member leadership council had also been representatives at the seventh Palestinian Arab congress, as had one regular member of the party. Five of the 11 leaders were members of the Arab executive. Akram Zu'aytir's older brother, 'Adil, was also a member of the Arab Executive.⁸¹

Because the Palestinian political leadership, as represented in the Palestinian congresses, was a heterogeneous and changing group, it is difficult to compare meaningfully the Istiqlalists with the rest of the elite in terms of social or economic class. It can be said, though, that five of the party's leadership committee were from urban notable families and, at least two of those five, were from families that had in recent generations made the transition from being rural leaders.⁸² A sixth, Fahmi al-'Abbushi, remained based in the town of Jenin, which he represented on the Arab Executive and of which he later became mayor. The 'Abbushi family and the 'Abd al-Hadi families were traditionally rivals for leadership in Jenin and its environs.⁸³ Two scions of these families being aligned in the same nationalist party is suggestive of the manner in which new associations based on ideological affinity had begun to compete with kinship as a focus of loyalty within the political elite.

'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, a secretary of the Arab Executive, came from one of the most long established of Palestine's notable families and

one that had been among the first to accommodate to the circumstances of the *Tanzimat*. He was described in a British report that admitted to some uncertainties as having a substantial income of £P 2000–3000 a year.⁸⁴ Akram Zuʿaytir, also from a notable Nablus family, described in his diaries the financial difficulties of his family in the late 1920s.⁸⁵

Four members of the party's leadership committee were not from what were typically considered notable families, though two of the four, ʿIzzat Darwazah and Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, had been representatives at the seventh Palestinian congress and Darwazah was a member of the Arab Executive. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Darwazah's family had long been involved in commerce in Nablus, but he appears to have been of modest means at best.⁸⁶ Al-Hajj Ibrahim was counted among Haifa's *dhawat*. But neither previous generations of his family nor his contemporary relatives had attained such distinction. His employment as manager of the Arab Bank in Haifa gave him a small salary, supplemented to some extent by the agricultural land he owned to the west of the city.⁸⁷

Two others of this group were not among the more visible political leaders under the mandate until the establishment of the party. One, Harbi al-Ayyubi, worked as a clerk in the Jaffa municipal administration and as a journalist. He had formerly served as an Ottoman military officer, which was a career traditionally chosen by upwardly mobile members of the lower classes, though this trend had probably changed in the final years of the empire.⁸⁸ Another who was not previously visible in political leadership was Dr Salim Salamah, a dentist and the only Christian among the 11 party leaders. His prior political activities seem to have been confined to his position in the leadership of the Muslim-Christian Association of Ramallah and his participation in the Nablus congress protesting against arming the Zionist settlements.⁸⁹

Of the 17 party members (both leaders and regular members) who can be identified by profession around the time of the party's activity, nine were teachers, three were lawyers, two were physicians and three were in commerce or manufacturing. At least 11 were in journalism, either as contributors to the press or as reporters and editors. Most of these 17 combined two or more vocations. Because at least five of the party's 19 members on whom biographical information is available came from what can certainly be called notable families, it

seems likely that at least a substantial part of their incomes derived from land ownership.

With regard to the question of class background and affinities, it is significant that one Istiqlalist, George Mansur, became one of the most prominent Arab labour organizers and another, Muhammad Nimr al-ʿAwdah, likewise became a labour organizer and joined the Palestine Communist Party after the collapse of the Istiqlal Party. As described earlier, Hamdi al-Husayni also had close contacts with the Communist Party and with labour activism. All three had worked at various times as schoolteachers.

The Istiqlal Party's members can thus be said to a limited degree to have overlapped with the larger Palestinian political elite, and this appears to have been more characteristic of the party's leadership than it was of its rank-and-file membership. The high proportion of professionals, especially journalists and schoolteachers, along with the party's selectiveness in accepting members, suggest that secular educations and modernist worldviews were primary sources of solidarity for the members. That fewer than half its members left us with accessible biographical records indicates that many Istiqlalists did not attract the attention of either the British authorities or Palestinian followings.

The Istiqlalists, because of their Western-style educations and modernist worldviews, might be considered a part of the political elite. But the term 'elite' becomes less useful for describing activists who repudiated the idea of a political stratum that monopolized the conduct of national affairs in closed and clandestine meetings with colonial officials, sealed off from the scrutiny of what the Istiqlalists insisted was the nation and the public. The formation of this public and the consequent encroachment on the domain of the notable politicians was, in part, an outcome of the advent and expansion of the new forms of public associations that solicited the membership of those acculturated into a modernist worldview. These new associations were the organizational complements to the newspapers and nationalist school textbooks that advocated the idea of the nation and debated its character. Through these associations, the Istiqlalists undertook to mobilize Palestinians to demand independence.

The Party and Palestinian Associations

Of the associations the Istiqlal Party penetrated and tried to give a

decisively nationalist orientation, the YMMAs were the most important, followed by the Arab Boy Scout troops and athletic clubs. The day after the party was formally established, the YMMAs held their 1932 congress in Acre. When the congress convened, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, leader of the party's Haifa branch and president of the Haifa YMMA, served as the congress president; there were at least three other Istiqlalists among the 64 delegates from 13 of Palestine's YMMAs. In addition, Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al Qassam, who was closely associated with the party, was a delegate and also served as vice president of the Haifa YMMA. The congress, in addition to taking positions on educational and social matters, resolved to unify the Palestinian YMMAs under one framework, and a unity committee was formed and based in Haifa under the presidency of Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim. More indicative of the organizers' political intent was the adoption of a proposal by Subhi al-Khadra' to hold celebrations of the anniversary of the Battle of Hittin – the victory of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi (Saladin) over Crusader forces in 1187. The organizers intended to turn the occasion into an anti-imperialist rally.⁹⁰

Several thousand people from Palestine, Lebanon, Damascus and Transjordan attended the Hittin Day celebration held in the courtyard of Haifa's Fasihah Islamic School on 27 August. The speeches given by leading Palestinian and Syrian Istiqlalists dealt with the revival of the Arab nation, its independence and the need for unity between Muslim and Christian Arabs.⁹¹ Although the rally was not called an Istiqlalist event, it was held on agreement between the party and the Haifa organizers who included Syrian Istiqlalist exiles. The occasion inaugurated not only public activity by the Istiqlal Party, but also the campaign in Palestine for unity under Iraqi leadership and immediate independence.⁹² Unlike subsequent Istiqlal Party rallies, the speakers at the celebration had nothing specific to say about a programme of political action, which may have been why the attendance was much higher there than at later party rallies.

The Hittin Day rally was not only an Istiqlalist event, but no Congress of Youth leaders took part; and neither Hajj Amin al-Husayni nor any leading members of the Majlisi faction were among the speakers or organizers.⁹³ In late August, just before the celebrations, Taysir Dawji reported to his contact at the Jewish Agency that Hajj Amin had begun to undermine the Istiqlal Party. According to Dawji, the mufti saw in the party's leadership committee a rival that

could easily dominate the national movement in Palestine, and the fact that the Palestine government had recognized it made him feel all the more insecure. The Istiqlalists sensed his manoeuvrings and began to organize secret meetings to counter them.⁹⁴

More than ever, Hajj Amin needed a strong Majlisi hand in the leadership of the youth movement and the young man to fill this requirement was Ya'qub al-Ghusayn.⁹⁵ Nine days after the Hittin rally, the Congress of Youth's executive committee met in Jaffa where a new executive committee was elected, Rasim al-Khalidi resigned from the presidency and al-Ghusayn took over.⁹⁶ The latter was the son of an Ottoman official whose career had taken him to various parts of the empire and who had returned to Ramleh to become one of the wealthiest men in the country through his investments in orange groves. Like other notable families, the al-Ghusayns had secured a position in the government administration for one of their members, this time Ya'qub's younger brother Fawzi as a public prosecutor in the court system.⁹⁷ Ya'qub al-Ghusayn thus had considerable assets at his disposal and from the time of his accession to the Congress of Youth presidency proved to be an ambitious politician and effective organizer. His formally organized base of support in Ramleh was the YMMA, of which he was president, and his influence also extended to the scout troop attached to the association.⁹⁸ In addition, he was a founder of the Ramleh Arab Youth Society, which was affiliated to the Congress of Youth.⁹⁹ Perhaps most important for his relations with the Majlisi faction, al-Ghusayn was a member of the local council of the Islamic Congress in Ramleh.¹⁰⁰

The same day as al-Ghusayn took the presidency of the Congress of Youth, 'Izzat Darwazah gave a lecture in a youth club at al-Birah entitled 'Independence is a Natural Right'. In it he assailed the critics of the national movement who claimed that economic development must precede political independence. This was a clear attack on Congress of Youth policy, which the senior political leadership had succeeded in confining chiefly to organizing the national fund and boycotting foreign goods.¹⁰¹

In the period following the Hittin Day rally, tensions increased between the anti-mandate tendencies within the YMMAs and members who favoured accommodation with the government. This was first visible at the Acre YMMA, which the government closed only ten days after the Hittin Day celebration and one day after the change of

leadership in the Congress of Youth.¹⁰² Competition between the Majlisi and Opposition factions was no doubt the most proximate cause of the quarrel. Some months later *al-Arab* carried a lengthy anonymous letter on the incident in which the author, observing that the government closed the association when the Hittin Day rally was still ringing in its ears, gave primary attention to the issue of partisanship. He also accused the government of having placed obstacles in the path of new elections in the association because it expected the same group that held 'the Hittin celebrations and other protests' to be re-elected.¹⁰³ This was an open assertion that the group that took control of the association was of neither a pro-government nor Majlisi faction inclination.

Only a few weeks later the Istiqlalists Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and Mu'in al-Madi resigned from the Majlisi-dominated Haifa Islamic Society. They did this ostensibly in support of Shaykh Kamil al-Qassab who had been forced out of his job as the society's director of schools.¹⁰⁴ The dispute, as it was covered in *Filastin*, concerned such matters as al-Qassab's contract and pay as well as his policy on hiring teachers.¹⁰⁵ Al-Qassab was, however, one of the Hittin Day rally organizers. The Haifa Islamic Society was effectively the parent organization of the Haifa YMMA and the two organizations' leaderships were intertwined. Thus, it is telling that, though Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and Mu'in al-Madi resigned from the Islamic Society, they remained intensely involved in the city's YMMA. Less than a year later, a British intelligence report referred to a 'difference between the YMMA Haifa [*sic*] led by Rashid Haj Ibrahim and other Istiqlal followers, and the Moslem Society representing the old politicians, partly affiliated with the Supreme Council'.¹⁰⁶

The same trend appeared at the Gaza YMMA. Shortly after the party's establishment, the mandatory authorities permitted the city's YMMA branch to reopen after its two-year closure. As discussed in Chapter 3, the branch had been closed because its anti-mandate leaders – most notably Hamdi al-Husayni and Khadr al-Ja'farawi – had attempted to use the association as a base for their resistance activities. When the Gaza branch reopened, Hamdi al-Husayni and Khadr al-Ja'farawi became its president and secretary respectively. At this time, the Gaza YMMA also announced its participation in the Hittin Day celebrations.¹⁰⁷ Most identifiable members of the Gaza branch of the Istiqlal Party took leading positions in the Gaza YMMA.

Al-Jaʿfarawi also led the ʿUmar al-Faruq scout troop at the Fallah School in Gaza, which the SMC operated.¹⁰⁸ The troop had moved its headquarters from the Fallah School to the YMMA building at the end of November.¹⁰⁹ By this time, Hamdi al-Husayni had also participated in an Istiqlal Party rally at which the speakers openly criticized the mufti. All this strongly suggests that the nationalist youth organizers in Gaza split away from the Fallah School in much the same way as those at the Haifa Islamic Society had distanced themselves from that Majlisi institution.

During the year following the establishment of the Istiqlal Party, YMMAs spread rapidly, especially in the northern and central parts of the country. Istiqlalists al-Hajj Ibrahim, Subhi al-Khadraʾ and Shaykh ʿIzz al-Din al-Qassam were the most visible organizers of new branches.¹¹⁰ British intelligence reports noted the spread of YMMAs and Arab scout troops, the nationalist character of the organizations and the Istiqlal Party's leadership in this trend.¹¹¹ Another intelligence report remarked on the spread of YMMAs even to smaller villages and on the 'training [of] the younger generation in political agitation, under cover of national culture'.¹¹²

The Istiqlal Party was one of a number of new associations formed or expanded during the 1930s. Among these were the Arab women's associations that were established in several cities after October 1929, which was when 200 Palestinian Arab women held the first Arab women's congress in Jerusalem.¹¹³ The members of these women's associations were typically born or married into urban elite families; five members of the Arab women's executive committee who had organized the women's congress were married to members of the Arab Executive. Tarab ʿAbd al-Hadi, for instance, was married to ʿAwni ʿAbd al-Hadi, and Anisa Subhi al-Khadraʾ was married to Subhi al-Khadraʾ and was the sister of the Lebanese Druze Istiqlalist Fuʾad Salim.¹¹⁴ Arab women's associations engaged in political activity, brazenly confronted the government and subordinated women's rights to Arab national independence.¹¹⁵ As we have seen, the Gaza YMMA led by Hamdi al-Husayni provided the venue for a lecture on women's awakening. Yet, despite these links with the party, Istiqlalist publications gave even less attention to women's associations than they did to workers and peasants, which is to say none. This seems to fit in well with the established practice of middle-class men viewing the development of the public sphere in western and central Europe as a

necessarily masculine pursuit that required restricting the realm of the feminine to the home.¹¹⁶

The Istiqlalists had more significant contact with the Palestine Communist Party. The largely Jewish party was then attempting to recruit Arab members and to create an 'all Arab workers' and peasants' federation of the Arab peoples'.¹¹⁷ At the end of 1932, Najati Sidqi, a Palestinian communist of Arab nationalist sensibilities, was released from prison and the Palestine Communist Party's central committee ordered him to approach 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi to begin coordination with the Istiqlal Party.¹¹⁸ Sidqi makes no mention of this in his memoirs, but he does recall his contacts with his friend Hamdi al-Husayni at this time and the fact that al-Husayni urged him to write articles that were published in *al-Arab*.¹¹⁹ Sidqi came under intense surveillance within the next few months and left Palestine for Paris under orders from the Comintern the following June.¹²⁰ Though it seems the two parties did not develop an effective working relationship and that the Istiqlal Party was by no means revolutionary, it was certainly viewed as a threat by Palestinian leaders, not least among them Hajj Amin al-Husayni and his supporters. His conflict with the party was felt outside Palestine, and it jeopardized the pan-Arab independence movement that Shakib Arslan and Rashid Rida endeavoured to launch.

The Party and Arab Unity

Soon after the party was established, Rashid Rida in Cairo became aware of the rupture between the Istiqlalists and Hajj Amin. He wrote to tell Shakib Arslan that the party's establishment had angered the mufti, who then planted a rumour in King Faysal's inner circle that the party was acting in Saudi interests.¹²¹ The trouble between the Istiqlalists and Hajj Amin distressed the king and Rida feared it might endanger the Arab Congress. He nonetheless characterized Hajj Amin as essential to the independence movement, explaining that when Yasin al-Hashimi went to Jerusalem to meet the Arab Congress organizers, Hajj Amin felt acutely that he had been left out.¹²²

Rida's letter to the party in Jerusalem was lengthy and explicit in its directives. As in his letter to Arslan, he explained that the mufti had great stature in the Islamic world and that the friction between him and the party was having an ill effect on the preparations for the general Arab congress. He warned, 'It is not permissible under any

conditions to display enmity [towards Hajj Amin], lest it be taken as proof of the great fault of the Arabs which, as King Faysal understands, is disunity and jealousy.' Despite this admonition, his disappointment with Hajj Amin showed through. He predicted that when Hajj Amin saw an organization steadfast in its service to the nation and commanding its support, he would take pride in it rather than combat it. He also informed the party that he was sending Asa'd Daghir to mediate between them and the mufti during King Faysal's trip to Amman in September. His mediation produced an agreement under which the Istiqlalists would not publicly impugn the mufti.¹²³

When King Faysal arrived in Amman he held private audiences with Palestinian Istiqlalists, in which he told them that he intended to unite Iraq and Syria, and Palestine with them.¹²⁴

Iraq entered the League of Nations as an independent state in early October, about two months after the establishment of the Istiqlal Party. As might be expected, the party and palace exchanged letters of congratulations and gratitude marking the occasion.¹²⁵ *Al-ʿArab* gave King Faysal's speech on this event the obligatory good reception, reporting appreciatively his conciliatory remarks admitting the Iraqi opposition parties' contribution to independence.¹²⁶ Nonetheless, it was clear that *al-ʿArab* looked to the opposition to realize full independence for Iraq.¹²⁷ The newspaper devoted considerable space to reports from its Baghdad correspondent, who in no way attempted to whitewash King Faysal's administration. He likened independent Iraq to any other region under colonial authority, emphasizing that British influence remained strong. He urged the opposition – particularly Yasin al-Hashimi – to boycott elections as long as emergency regulations passed by Nuri al-Saʿid's former government prohibited a true opposition from organizing or making its voice heard.¹²⁸

Despite *al-ʿArab*'s Iraqi coverage having stressed the degree to which the Istiqlalists had hung their hopes on the opposition parties, the party had to contend with suspicions that it was King Faysal's creation and was financially dependent on him. *Al-ʿArab* noted Jewish and foreign press reports saying as much. The journal's response emphasized the specifically Palestinian circumstances that led to the establishment of the party and defined the question of Palestine as a distinct issue within the larger Arab cause. It also emphasized that neither King Faysal nor anyone else financed the party.¹²⁹ These denials notwithstanding, it seems likely that the party did receive

funding from Iraq via Yasin al-Hashimi. Sami 'Abd al-Hafiz al-Qaysi's research on Iraqi government documents indicates that al-Hashimi secretly channelled government funds to 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, Mu'in al-Madi, Subhi al-Khadra' and Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim through the Iraqi consul in Haifa. He also sent money to several Palestinian newspapers, including *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* and *Filastin*. However, al-Qaysi does not specify the dates of the documents he used and some clearly date from 1934 or after, by which time the party had ceased to function.¹³⁰

The party's commitment to Arab unity and inter-Arab alignments generated debate in the press and a lot of space in British intelligence reports. But pan-Arabism was clearly a secondary issue at the public rallies the party held in the period leading up to its campaign for a policy of non-cooperation with the mandatory government. These rallies represented another strategy for fostering the emergence of a Palestinian public sphere that was Arab nationalist in its outlook.

The Party's Activities in Palestine: The First Six Months

Soon after King Faysal's visit to Amman and at a time when the Arab Executive had ceased to function, the Istiqlal Party began a series of public rallies and speaking engagements. Criticism of the leadership in the party's newspaper and public rallies, and the positions the party's leadership took in the Arab Executive had all contributed to the effective collapse of the executive in autumn 1932.

A little over a month after the party's establishment, the French reports (two government reports on Arab landlessness and settlement) were completed and copies submitted to the office of the Arab Executive. The first report asserted that 'it is not unfair to infer that in some leading Arab quarters [land sales to Jews] are viewed with no disfavour.'¹³¹ This was no revelation because, as the report stated, the matter had received wide coverage in the Arab press. In summer and autumn 1932, *al-Arab* was particularly aggressive on the topic and named the various leaders suspected of selling and brokering land.¹³² Nonetheless, in formulating a response to the government reports, the Arab Executive had also to confront the question of its leadership's involvement in land transfers.

The Arab Executive resolved to meet on 9 September 1932 to discuss the reports but postponed the matter, claiming that no summary was yet available. For over a month, the executive was silent on the

reports, though 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, in his role as secretary to the executive, promised to prepare the summary.¹³³ After almost six weeks the Arab Executive met to discuss the reports and the government's proposed development scheme. The executive collectively complained that the French reports and development scheme were aimed at accommodating more Jewish immigration. Therefore, the members resolved to reject the development scheme and to plead with the authorities to stop Jewish immigration and land transfers to Jews completely. The Arab Executive also formed a committee to deal with allegations that some of its members and those of the SMC had sold and brokered land to the Zionists. 'Abd al-Hadi, Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar and 'Izzat Darwazah were elected to the committee with the task of discovering the names of the brokers and reporting back to the executive in three months.¹³⁴ This was the beginning of a long silence from the Arab Executive.

In this atmosphere, the party convened its first public meeting on 24 September at the Jaffa Islamic athletic club.¹³⁵ Neither the press nor other sources say precisely how many people attended, but it was certainly not a mass rally. The Arabic press, which gave the meeting generous and favourable coverage, reported that it was well attended by Jaffa's local leadership and that a group of youth had travelled with Istiqlalist leaders from Nablus for the four-hour meeting.¹³⁶

In his speech at the meeting, which expressed the party's general outlook, 'Izzat Darwazah referred to recent receptions and banquets that Palestinian leaders had attended with government officials. To these leaders he directed his warning, quoted in part above, that public opinion could become a weapon directed against those who dealt with imperialists as well as against the imperialists themselves. 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi addressed Palestinian issues, including the danger of Jewish immigration. In this context, he discussed in detail the land problem, noting how much land had passed into Zionist hands and the total amount of cultivable land in the country. He also stressed that only Arab unity could save Palestine. Harbi al-Ayyubi, regarded at the time as the director of the party's branch in Jaffa, analysed the government's anticipated new education ordinance from the aspect of its effect on the national movement. He explained that it gave the director of education the authority to expel teachers who incite their students against the mandate or inspire disloyalty.¹³⁷

Akram Zu'aytir also directed his remarks at the importance of using

public opinion to change both the leadership's and the mandatory administration's policy. He described how meetings with the high commissioner had failed to bring any satisfaction to Palestinian Arabs. Emphasizing the importance of the press for the national movement, Zu'aytir attacked the government's expected amendments to the press ordinance.¹³⁸ Like the other speakers, he displayed a keen awareness of the relationship between the press and political activism. In an interview with *Filastin* the morning after the gathering, Zu'aytir remarked, 'It is really amazing that our meeting broke up at midnight last night. Then we hear at five o'clock this morning a paper seller calling out what was said in the meeting.'¹³⁹

The Istiqlal Party convened its second speaking event in Nablus on 2 November, the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. This meeting was different from the Jaffa one. It was closer to a true popular rally, taking place in conjunction with the general strike the Arab Executive traditionally called on Balfour Day.¹⁴⁰ The Istiqlalists booked the cinema in Nablus for the meeting, decorating it with an Arab flag and portraits of Sharif Husayn and King Faysal. They prepared seats for invitees, who included village representatives, and reserved a special section for the press.¹⁴¹ Delegations came from Transjordan and Beirut as well as from the Palestinian towns and cities of Jerusalem, Acre, Safad, Baysan, Nazareth, Jenin, Bethlehem and al-Birah. With local attendees, they constituted a crowd that was much larger outside than inside the cinema.¹⁴² *Filastin* estimated that about 2000 people attended the rally, whereas Taysir Dawji guessed the crowd to be roughly 1000.¹⁴³ It was, then, a significant proportion of the city's 17,000 residents that turned out.

The speeches, which stressed that Zionism was an instrument of British policy, were strongly anti-government. The speakers held that conditions demanded that Palestinians concentrate all their resistance against the British, leaving Zionism as a secondary matter. They denigrated Arab civil servants for working hand-in-hand with the mandatory authorities, of which they asserted Hajj Amin al-Hasayni was less than innocent; Ahmad al-Shuqayri (not a party member) explicitly portrayed him as a pawn of the British.¹⁴⁴ The gathering passed a resolution demanding a change in government policy and shifting the focus of resistance from Zionism to Zionism's British sponsor. Significantly, the resolution stated that the assembly 'regards the supporters of the English to be the supporters of the Zionists'.¹⁴⁵

The Istiqlal Party staged its third rally in Jerusalem on 9 December to mark the anniversary of the city's occupation by British forces in 1917. It issued a declaration that Palestine's continued occupation was a betrayal of the allied powers' wartime promises of independence. *Al-'Arab* published reproductions of the leaflets British planes had dropped during the Palestine campaign promising independence to the Arabs and asking them to support the Allied cause.¹⁴⁶ Even though the Jerusalem rally attracted delegations from Nablus, Jaffa, Gaza, Bethlehem, al-Birah, Silwan, Hebron and Transjordan, attendance was low.¹⁴⁷ The Jewish Agency's Arab informants estimated it variously at 120 and 200. After the meeting, party leaders complained about the meeting's disorder and poor attendance.¹⁴⁸ As at the Nablus rally, the party put forward a resolution to the assembly in Jerusalem, which was approved. The statement placed ultimate guilt for colonization on the British administration, castigating it for its denial of self-rule, repression of political freedom and refusal to fulfil its wartime promises.¹⁴⁹

An Istiqlal rally was held in Haifa within a week of the Jerusalem gathering. There are no estimates of the number that attended, but it was held in the main hall of the Khedivial Hotel. By contrast with the large Hittin Day rally held in the same city only four months before, there were probably no more than a few hundred in the audience, perhaps because Palestinians close to the government were trying to prevent it happening. In referring disparagingly to the Arab civil servants upon whom the British administration based its rule, *al-'Arab's* coverage of the rally transmitted this suspicion, complaining of those with 'special interests' who had spread innuendoes about the rally but who were too cowardly to own up to their activities.¹⁵⁰ Though British intelligence noted the somewhat moderated tone of the speeches at the Haifa rally compared with preceding gatherings, it was a considerable worry that the speakers promoted a policy of non-cooperation with the government, including non-payment of taxes and the boycott of official functions.¹⁵¹ As in previous rallies, the assembly passed a resolution condemning the government's policy on land sales and immigration.¹⁵²

Staging ceremonies on occasions like the occupation of Jerusalem and Hittin Day involved the invention of tradition, as Akram Zu'aytir later noted almost literally in his diary.¹⁵³ No less significantly, as a way of directly addressing members of the public, the speeches at

these rallies and the resolutions presented to the assembled crowds for their approval, in effect amounted to performances in which the public and nation authorized the activists' decisions. The rallies also symbolically and effectively challenged the closed and secretive politics of notables – activities that perhaps reflected the older Istiqlalists' experiences during Faysal's Damascus government of participating in popular committees and witnessing the Syrian government's efforts at 'mobilization from above'.¹⁵⁴

The effort to pull political activity out of the closed offices of the Arab Executive and hold it up for public scrutiny was new to postwar Palestinian political life, though the numbers of people drawn to these events were usually small. The limited size of the public rallies notwithstanding, that the British administration required new legislation to control the press and to limit political activism was one of the best indications that a sea change was taking place.

Regulating the Public Sphere

The Palestine government had recognized the role of the press in organizing the 1931 Nablus protests against the sealed armories in Jewish settlements and, in response, had commissioned the government of Egypt's former oriental secretary to establish a press bureau in Palestine. In the following months, as Palestinian newspapers became more critical of British policies, government officials saw the need to create new legislation to regulate this element of the emerging public sphere. One anonymous official noted in April 1932 that the existing press law, being 'mainly Ottoman law' was 'cumbrous and obscure' and that it was 'difficult to obtain a conviction from a Court of Law in cases of offences by newspapers'. He therefore proposed that the press law be modelled on the Cyprus Press Ordinance, and that the 'executive [namely high commissioner] should retain power to suspend a paper, and to seize copies, [sic] for publishing seditious matter', while it should be left to a court to determine if copies should be destroyed, equipment confiscated or deposits forfeited.¹⁵⁵

The new press ordinance was issued in January 1933.¹⁵⁶ Under its terms, which still largely reflected the Ottoman press law, any newspaper or printing press was required to be licensed by government. It was a criminal offence, punishable by up to three months in prison and a fine, to possess a printing press without a permit. The owner of a paper published more than twice weekly had to submit a bond of

£P 150 to the district commissioner, thus guaranteeing payment of any fine for publishing 'any seditious or libel' [sic].¹⁵⁷ The ordinance required each paper to submit two copies of every issue to the district commissioner of the place of publication. The editor of a paper was also required to 'insert free of charge in the next issue of the newspaper ... such denial [of a previous statement in the paper] as the Chief Secretary [of the Palestine government] may, in the public interest, deem necessary to publish'. The ordinance gave unrestricted power to the high commissioner to suspend a paper for any period he might consider necessary if he judged its publication 'likely to endanger the public peace'. He could also exclude from Palestine any newspaper published outside the country 'as he may think fit'.¹⁵⁸

The government likewise revealed its anxieties in November 1932 when it issued the amended Prevention of Crimes Ordinance. The law gave district commissioners wide discretionary power in ordering a citizen to be placed under bond guaranteeing compliant behaviour. Forms for the orders were pre-printed, requiring district commissioners, acting as magistrates, simply to fill in the person's name and the amount of the bond.¹⁵⁹ Speakers at Istiqlal Party rallies ridiculed the new law for its arbitrary nature.¹⁶⁰ *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* reported that Istiqlalists in Nablus referred to it as the 'Law of Maybe' (*qanun rubbama*) 'because the judge bonds over the accused because he "might" threaten the public security, "could" cause disturbances and "probably" is dangerous'.¹⁶¹

A third piece of legislation – the new education ordinance promulgated in January 1933 – appears to have concerned the Istiqlalists at least as much as the new press ordinance and amendment of the prevention of crimes ordinance.¹⁶² The Istiqlalists, among whom teachers and textbook writers figured prominently, were highly conscious of the classroom as a primary site for nationalist acculturation or, alternatively, for the dissemination of anglophile attitudes and for training civil servants. It was in the classroom and the educational system more broadly that non-elites encountered the culture of modernist education, and the mandatory government also undertook to regulate this dimension of the public sphere.

The Istiqlal Party and Education Policy

The hybrid nature of British colonial administration, mixing indirect rule and its attendant sectarianism with the bureaucratic state's direct

rule, was reflected in mandatory education policy. Initially adopting a non-interventionist attitude to education, until 1933 the government theoretically considered the legal basis for its policy to be the Ottoman Education Law of 1913. However, the Religious Communities Organizations Ordinance of 1926 expressed the mandatory government's educational intentions. It recognized the right to 'autonomy in the internal affairs' of the religious communities and with it the right to impose on their members 'contributions or fees' and to establish cultural councils. In conjunction with this, Article 15 of the mandate guaranteed the right of each community to its own schools.¹⁶³

With this legal justification, the mandatory government intended to place the burden of education on religious organizations. As discussed in Chapter 2, during the two-and-a-half years of military administration in Palestine, the British administration opened an average of 75 village schools a year. This changed with the coming of civil administration, after which the pace of government school openings slowed. From 1925 to 1933 the number of government schools actually declined. The government's policy amounted to privatization of what had been recognized as a public and government function at the end of the Ottoman period. The policy constituted the devolution of responsibility for education onto communal institutions.¹⁶⁴ Tibawi claimed that Palestinian Arabs viewed this 'not only as a break with tradition but a vital change of status. This is why the Religious Communities Ordinance aroused very strong Arab hostility.'¹⁶⁵

After 1929 Arab discontent with the limited educational services increased greatly. In 1932, the education department's rejection of the application of large numbers of boys and girls to government Arab schools because of a shortage of facilities and personnel provoked a sharp response from Palestinian Arabs. Wauchope told the Colonial Office that the Arab press angrily accused the government of willfully promoting ignorance and that a 'general strike in all Government schools was narrowly averted'.¹⁶⁶ In response to the protests and as a symbolic step towards meeting the Arab community's demand for education, the government produced a new education ordinance that envisioned an expansion of schools without the goals of either universal or compulsory education.¹⁶⁷

British officials could not have failed to notice the marked increase in the politicization of educated Arab youth, schoolteachers and the classroom as demonstrated in previous chapters. Just as striking must

have been the increase in private Arab schools. As we have seen, Humphrey Bowman, the director of education, was as leery as any colonial official of the spread of ideas of nationalism and independence through the schools. Consequently, the 1933 education ordinance embodied the government's intention to regulate this rapidly developing dimension of the public sphere, as it also moved to regulate the press and the expression of dissent.

For Arab, though not Jewish, education this marked a move towards 'direct rule'.¹⁶⁸ Local Arab education committees, which had enjoyed considerable authority under the Ottoman system, retained only advisory functions. Each committee was to be chaired by the most senior local government official, and members served subject to the approval of the senior official, with no more than five of thirteen members of a town's committee elected. For a village, three of seven members could be elected. Local education authorities were responsible for raising money for buildings, furniture, equipment and staff, but they exercised little influence over policy and curriculum.¹⁶⁹

The new ordinance empowered the director of education to dismiss teachers who 'imparted teaching of a seditious, disloyal, immoral or otherwise harmful character'.¹⁷⁰ Istiqlalists immediately recognized how easily nationalist education, not to mention the advocacy of independence, could be assimilated into the concepts of 'seditious' and 'disloyal'. Akram Zu'aytir recorded that the term 'disloyalty' made 'the blood boil in my veins'. He responded to the ordinance with a front-page article in *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, attacking the 'imperialism of souls' and the 'corruption of consciences'.¹⁷¹ The mandate's educational policy created conflict between the Arab community and the government over the control of education and its nationalist content. As Tibawi observes, 'In its essentials the conflict was a mere facet of the general political conflict which aimed at no less than complete national independence.'¹⁷² This was the Istiqlalists' position precisely.

The party articulated its stance in its January 1933 rebuttal of the high commissioner's report to the League of Nations. The statement deplored the mandatory government's neglect of education, asserting that there were roughly 1000 villages in Palestine, but only 300 of them had schools, and that there were at least 150,000 school-age boys and girls whereas only about 30,000 were in school. It added that there was yet no industrial school and the only agricultural school for Arabs was the one established by a grant from 'the Jew

Kadoorie' (Sir Ellis Kadoorie), although the high commissioner tried to claim it as a government achievement.¹⁷³ The party's statement was just as critical of the fact that the department of education was run by a British staff, which dictated the curriculum, texts and instructional methods. The statement described an atmosphere of hostility towards Arab nationalism that prevailed in the department, declaring 'The Department of Education, which oversees the schools of the Arabs, is intensely oppressive, intimidating in its policies, almost forbidding nationalist instruction or patriotic spirit. It spies on the Arab teachers intensely, and it attempts to have them spy on one another.'¹⁷⁴

The Istiqlalists might not have had a monopoly on these sentiments, but they were well placed to protest against the government's policies and to organize new schools.¹⁷⁵ When the Istiqlal-led Gaza YMMA reopened in August 1932, the association announced that it was establishing a day school in addition to its evening literacy programme, noting that there were insufficient government schools for the number of children seeking education.¹⁷⁶ The next month the YMMA held an open meeting, run by the Istiqlalists Khadr al-Ja'farawi, Ra'fat Burnu and Hamdi al-Husayni, on the critical shortage of schools in Palestine. In a speech deploring the government's low level of educational service, al-Husayni asserted that, of the 4000 children in the city aged six to fifteen, only 900 were receiving schooling, whether in government or traditional Qur'anic schools. During the meeting, a committee was formed to express the demand for more educational services from the government.¹⁷⁷ The YMMA opened its own school a little over two weeks later.¹⁷⁸

The Gaza YMMA's organizational work in educational affairs was part of the Istiqlal Party's agenda in the first few months of its existence. At the same time, Akram Zu'aytir formed a committee at the Nablus YMMA to protest against the government's policy and to gather data on the number of children seeking schooling in the city.¹⁷⁹ The party's magazine, *al-'Arab*, directed considerable attention to educational policy in Palestine. The issues it addressed were continuations of those about which Akram Zu'aytir anonymously wrote in a furious five-article series published on the front page of *Mir'at al-Sharq* the previous year. Those articles characterized the Palestine department of education as a haven for incompetent but highly paid British officials who were disdainful of the Arab students, and who pursued thinly veiled religious agendas.¹⁸⁰ No Zionist leader earned

the level of contempt the Istiqlalists displayed towards Humphrey Bowman.¹⁸¹ As a response to the challenge of foreign influences in education, *al-Arab* advocated a unified nationalist school programme for all the Arab lands and one that included independent scouting and athletic organizations.¹⁸² The struggle between the government and nationalists to control the rising generation of educated Palestinian Arabs' acculturation was evident within the first five months of the Istiqlal Party's existence. It also typified the manner in which every institution and association was compelled to define its relationship with the government. By the end of 1932 the Istiqlalists had begun to channel these tensions into mobilizing the Palestinian public for a programme of non-cooperation and civil disobedience, modelled on the example of the Indian independence movement.

Conclusions

The Istiqlal Party was an innovative addition to Palestinian Arab associational and political life. The activists who established it intended to use public opinion to call the country's leadership to account and to force it to insist that the government change its policy of supporting the Jewish national home. This strategy required a shift of agency in political affairs from the government and notables to the constituencies of the latter. Such a shift presumed a functioning public sphere and an informed public. For these, the Istiqlalists took as their models an idealized version of western European history in which public opinion was something the nation formed and expressed.

To the Istiqlalists, the nation meant the Arab nation, but even their usage of the concept showed that it was malleable. Party members in varying circumstances contrasted Palestinian identity against the Arab unity they viewed as the means to, and proof of, complete Arab independence. In that context, their identifying Palestine as South Syria was an implication of their belief that the questions of unity and independence were inseparable. It also derived, on a level of practical diplomacy, from the hope that Palestine could gain independence through King Faysal's plan to unify Syria with Iraq. In other contexts, Istiqlalists referred to a distinct Palestinian Arab people. It is especially telling that when the party was accused of being Faysal's instrument, *al-Arab* responded by asserting that Palestinians formed the party in response to specifically Palestinian circumstances. Of all the party's statements, the issue of Arab independence completely

overshadowed questions of the mechanics of governance in any future state or the specifics of social reforms. It is hardly certain that, under an independent government, the party's members would have coalesced as a political faction.

The Istiqlalists were not the political movement of a new middle class that set out to dislodge a feudal aristocracy. They more accurately represented the diversification of professions within the great landowning families and the entry into public affairs by men who began life in less advantaged circumstances, but who acquired modernist educations. Both processes manifested strategies adopted by individuals as the bureaucratic state advanced in the prewar period and resumed in altered circumstances under British administration. By virtue of their Western-style educations and careers in fields such as journalism, education, law and administration, the Istiqlalists were both products of, and agents in, the emergence and expansion of a public sphere in Palestine.

Compared with one of the industrialized powers of the 1930s, or even with Egypt and India where presses and cable communications rapidly became politically active after the 1880s, the scope of the public sphere in mandatory Palestine was narrow.¹⁸³ The country's largest Arabic newspapers in 1932 had press runs that were well under the largest Paris dailies of the 1790s and perhaps two or three times those of a typical paper in provincial Britain or the Virginia colony during the 1760s.¹⁸⁴ Even more significantly, the literacy rate of Palestinian Arabs during the Palestine mandate was probably a fraction of that of the French population towards the end of the eighteenth century or the free population of British colonial America at the beginning of the American Revolution.¹⁸⁵ In any of these instances, functional literacy did not make one 'a reader'.¹⁸⁶

The limited reach of Palestine's Arabic print media was offset by the fact that it operated within a network of telecommunications that brought news to Palestinians from Europe, India, other Arab countries and parts of Palestine within days or hours of the reported events. This represented a decisive difference between nationalist activism in the Palestine mandate and the eighteenth-century revolutions. On the eve of the American Revolution, events in England were reported in Virginia papers ten to twelve weeks after the fact; news items from Pennsylvania and New York took two to three weeks to be reported in the Virginian press.¹⁸⁷ The contrasting rapidity with

which news was reported in Palestine and with which nationalists could communicate with one another enhanced the sense of what Benedict Anderson calls 'simultaneity'.¹⁸⁸ Palestinian Arabs experienced this as a community in Palestine, as participants in the larger Arabic linguistic and print community and as subjects within a geographically extensive imperial system. This, in part, explains the apparent suddenness with which Palestinian Arabs were mobilized for major episodes of popular protest in 1933 and 1936, which are explored in Chapters 7 and 8.

The expansion of literacy, print media and telecommunications in modern societies transformed the concept of 'public' from meaning physical proximity in a specialized space to implying a community defined by shared participation in the knowledge and symbols borne by these media. For the Istiqlal Party, the public in the former sense was no less important than the latter, and the party's staging of rallies in the major cities was evidence of this. Neither the relatively small crowds that attended most of the Istiqlal Party's public meetings nor the limited readership of the Arabic press are the best indicators of the emergence of a politicized and nationalistic public. It is more telling that the British authorities felt compelled to regulate the emerging public sphere in Palestine precisely as the Istiqlalists and other nationalists undertook to direct public opinion against the mandatory government and against the leaders who refused to challenge it. This was evident in the stiffened Prevention of Crimes Ordinance, the Press Ordinance and in aspects of the Education Ordinance. The new legislation was indicative of the manner in which social institutions and the bureaucratic state develop in a reflexive relationship with one another. Evidence of an emergent public sphere that was responsive to the Istiqlalists' programme can also be seen in the fact that Hajj Amin al-Husayni was obliged to attempt to discredit the party soon after it was organized. As I shall demonstrate in the next chapter, the extent of the public sphere was further tested and proven when the Istiqlal Party began to direct public opinion towards a campaign of civil disobedience.

Chapter 6

The Non-Cooperation Programme

At the time of the establishment of the Istiqlal Party, British officials and leading Palestinian Arabs had jointly produced and continued to reproduce a system of political control that required the government to exercise only the most minimal repressive measures. As I have demonstrated in the preceding chapters, this system rested in part on what the British imagined to be a continuation of the *millet* 'system', and Hajj Amin al-Husayni demonstrated his ability to exploit the resources afforded by it. The creation of the SMC and the larger strategy of governing through mediation by religious leaders represented the essential conservatism of British colonial policies.

A second element of governance displayed more inclination on the part of British decision makers to innovate. Maintaining the colonial order entailed developing and expanding a bureaucracy, court system and police, all of which were essential to the exercise of authority by the Palestine government. The sons of leading Palestinian Arab families were especially drawn to the bureaucracy and court system to make their careers. Clearly, this provided another set of incentives for the notables to work with the British.

Every observer of this system knew that, without mediating elites, British control of Palestine would become drastically more difficult, if not evaporate altogether. This became more difficult to ignore as the world press covered Gandhi's programme of non-cooperation and civil disobedience in India between 1930 and 1933. The Palestinian Arab elite's involvement in the system of control also became harder to sustain in this period as Jewish immigration increased and more land was transferred to Jewish ownership.

By the end of 1932, the Istiqlal Party had begun openly to criticize the complicity of notables and civil servants and to call for a limited

programme of non-cooperation in Palestine modelled on Gandhi. In this chapter I explore how the Istiqlalists called into question not only the administrative activities of the Palestinian Arab political leadership, but also its adoption of British culture and sensibilities at the expense of Arab national culture. The party's demand for non-cooperation with the government thus constituted an assault on the politics of notables. The Istiqlalists undertook to transform the constituencies of the notables into an informed and nationalist public capable of making demands on its leadership and on the government. The resulting crisis for the country's Arab leadership and for British policymakers tested the strength of public opinion as a force in Palestinian Arab politics, and it demonstrated the extent to which the incentives created by the colonial system had penetrated the society.

Non-Cooperation and the YMMAs

As early as mid-December 1932, British intelligence reports noted that the Istiqlalists had begun to promote the idea of civil disobedience in their speeches at the Jerusalem and Haifa rallies.¹ *Al-'Arab*, from its first issues, celebrated Gandhi and his programme of civil disobedience, which included abstinence from employment in government jobs as well as the boycott of government schools, constitutional reform boards and government celebrations.² Even though the party never explicitly demanded the resignation of civil servants, *al-'Arab* began soon after its establishment to question openly the civil servants' commitment to independence.³

At the time, the educated youth were strongly attracted to positions in the civil service. The Palestinian intellectual Khalil al-Sakakini – an employee in the education department – noted in 1933 that many Palestinians were sending their sons to English schools abroad for the sole purpose of gaining high government posts when they returned.⁴ Not only did the willingness of many educated youth to seek employment in the government diminish their inclination to confront the mandatory government, but it also provoked animosities between the Muslim community and the Christian minority, for the latter predominated in the Palestine civil service. This matter especially complicated the Istiqlalists' critique of the civil servants because it could so easily be portrayed as an anti-Christian stance.

By the late 1920s Muslims had begun to demand employment in the bureaucracy in more representative proportions.⁵ Dr Khalil Abu-l-

‘Afiyah of the Jaffa Muslim Youth Society and Congress of Youth wrote to High Commissioner Wauchope at the end of June 1932 to complain that ‘Of the 3397 officials employed by the Government there are only 1111 Moslem.’⁶ A few months later, as the school crisis attracted considerable attention, educated young Muslims formed a preparatory committee to convene a congress to demand more government jobs, stressing that they did not represent an anti-Christian movement.⁷ The committee included most notably ‘Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni, son of Musa Kazim Pasha and, later, a military commander killed in the 1948 war.⁸ Muslim–Christian relations were tense in the autumn of 1932, with talk of Christians boycotting Muslim businesses and minor street brawls occurring between Muslim and Christian youths. This was especially true of Haifa where, two years earlier, the Christian journalist Jamil al-Bahri had been killed in a fight between Muslims and Christians over control of a cemetery.⁹

Among the members of the preparatory committee was the Istiqlalist Ibrahim al-Shanti, who withdrew with a small group of supporters, declaring the congress insufficiently nationalist.¹⁰ Al-Shanti explained that they had participated only to give the congress a nationalist character and to offer a gentle rebuke to the Christians who were unsupportive of the Muslims on the matter.¹¹ His presence was typical of the way Istiqlalists undertook to enter and influence emerging Palestinian associations. The Istiqlalist leadership at the Gaza YMMA issued a repudiation of the goals of the Congress of Educated Muslim Youth, criticizing the preparatory committee for seeking government jobs on the basis of proportional representation of religious communities, and thus breaking national unity. While the statement admitted the right of citizens to seek government jobs ‘if they wished’, it asked that they seek them as Arabs.¹²

The Istiqlalists criticized not only the civil servants for their relations with the mandatory government, but also the notables – a group from which many civil servants originated. Since taking office in 1931, High Commissioner Wauchope had engaged in a charm campaign to win leading Palestinians over to the government. He did so with banquets and receptions that brought Arab notables to the same tables with high government officials and Zionist leaders.¹³ Khalil al-Sakakini recorded at this time that many Palestinians considered it among the highest of honours to be invited to dine with the high commissioner.¹⁴ At the end of December, the Istiqlal Party’s leader-

ship council met to discuss the high commissioner's policy towards the notables and issued a statement to the press calling for the boycott of these functions because they 'lead the imperialist to believe in a weakness of the spirit of national resistance'.¹⁵

Shortly after the statement was issued, the British Orientalist Denison Ross (the first director of the School of Oriental and African Studies) visited Palestine to give a lecture at the YMCA in Jerusalem. On the occasion, the high commissioner held a dinner for Ross and invited Arab notables to attend. *Al-ʿArab* noted afterwards that the daily press deviated from its usual habit of publishing the names of those who attended. Therefore, the Istiqlalist magazine ran a contest offering a one-year subscription to anyone who submitted the names of those who received invitations, those who attended and those who sent regrets.¹⁶ In the winter of 1932/3, non-cooperation became the watchword of the Istiqlal Party.¹⁷

As the Istiqlalists prepared for their programme of non-cooperation and *al-ʿArab* published steady and harsh criticism of Arab notables who gained advancement through cultivating relations with the British, the newspaper directed its most intense opprobrium towards the YMCA. The relationship of British administrators with young Arab Muslims and Christians was most institutionalized in the YMCAs where they strove to advance English Protestant acculturation among Arab and Jewish civil servants. *Al-ʿArab* portrayed Humphrey Bowman, YMCA president and director of education, as controlling the YMCA in an imperious manner, employing it as a medium for the conduct of a missionary campaign.¹⁸ By *al-ʿArab*'s account, heads of government departments generally led YMCA branches, and senior and junior civil servants typically comprised the memberships. Joining a YMCA was seen as a step towards gaining a job or advancing in the bureaucracy, whether for a Muslim or Christian.¹⁹ The YMCA's favoured status in government circles contrasted sharply with the standing order prohibiting civil servants to join YMMAs.

As YMMAs became more politicized under Istiqlalist influence, the government intensified its regulation of them in the public sphere. On 24 December, as *al-ʿArab* began to flail at the YMCAs and the pro-government notables, it published a summary of a government order to increase the strictures against civil servants joining YMMAs. Civil servants at this time were not only forbidden to join YMMAs, but were also not allowed to attend any of their activities. All department

heads were required to certify that the new communiqué had reached their subordinates. The article noted that civil servants comprised the largest group of educated Arab Muslims and that they were effectively forced to pursue their educational and cultural activities under the auspices of government-controlled missionary YMCAs.²⁰

Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, in his role as president of the congress of YMMAs, issued a statement condemning the government's oppression of the associations. During the months of January and February 1933, as Istiqlalists laid the groundwork for their non-cooperation programme, *al-'Arab* hammered the theme of the unjust treatment of YMMAs and the imperialist character of YMCAs. It urged Muslim civil servants and YMMAs to express their disdain.²¹ These developments took place in tandem with Istiqlalist rallies designed to inform people of the dangers of land sales and Jewish immigration.

Testing the Strength of Public Opinion

It was the activities of young Istiqlalists like Hamdi al-Husayni, Hashim al-Sabi' and Akram Zu'aytir that poisoned the YMMAs in the government's eyes and inspired it to ban its officials from the associations. By contrast, those who joined the Congress of Arab Youth, created by the larger leadership to control the militant tendencies, faced no such obstacles to government employment. It was, then, an unwelcome development for both the government and the Arab Executive when the Istiqlal Party took over the leadership of the nationwide YMMA network. British intelligence reported that, at the central committee meeting of YMMAs in Haifa on 10 February 1933, it 'was agreed upon by the Istiqlal leaders present ... that the Istiqlal Party should assume the organisation and control of the YMMA.'²² A delegation from the Congress of Youth led by Ya'qub al-Ghusayn travelled to Haifa for the YMMA leadership meeting.²³ Two days later, the Congress of Youth executive, apparently reacting to Istiqlalists, elected a committee to organize a campaign to force the government to ban land sales to Jews.²⁴

Istiqlal Party rallies, communiqués, press articles and activities within the YMMAs threatened more than the credibility of the Congress of Youth. As the party promoted the idea of non-cooperation, the Arab Executive, having scarcely functioned for five months, sensed that unless it took action its leadership position would slip away from it. Within two weeks of the congress of YMMAs, the office

of the Arab Executive decided to convene a meeting of members and non-members to discuss what action could be taken to persuade the government to stop land sales and immigration. The Congress of Youth announced that it intended to participate in the Arab Executive meeting and submitted five suggestions for discussion.²⁵

In these suggestions the Congress of Youth revealed its origins as an Arab Executive creation intended to confine national 'resistance' to promoting the national fund. It recommended holding an eighth national congress to return the country to political activity, raising money for the National Land Salvation Company, and forming a committee of lawyers to represent Arabs displaced by land sales. Most significantly, the recommendations omitted a proposal about a campaign of non-cooperation or civil disobedience.²⁶ It is apparent that the Majlisi faction was also not thrilled at the prospect of a programme of non-cooperation. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* gave no coverage to the issue prior to the meeting of the office of the Arab Executive.

Most of the 64 people who attended the 24 February meeting were not members of the Arab Executive. British intelligence noted that 'the interest with which [the meeting] was regarded by the public was evinced by the number of spectators who arrived and/or forced their way into the hall.'²⁷ This occurred despite the Arab Executive having tried to keep the meeting closed.²⁸ The spectators' forced entry exemplified how a small, politically aware public was breaching the clandestine dealings of the political class. Four Istiqlalists, all members of the Arab Executive, were present, as were Hajj Amin al-Husayni and Ya'qub al-Ghusayn. The long and contentious meeting displayed much of what divided the Palestinian leaders but little basis for unity. Opposition members, including Fakhri al-Nashashibi, the Opposition mayor of Jerusalem's nephew and aide, saw the non-cooperation issue as a means of undermining Hajj Amin in his evolving relationship with the British. They thus lined up with the Istiqlalists and supported the non-cooperation programme.²⁹ Jamal al-Husayni argued during the meeting that, before they could demand that the high commissioner ban land sales, they must deal with the national leaders who themselves engaged in these sales. He pointedly asked 'Abd al-Hadi, who was on the Arab Executive's committee charged with investigating land transfers, what he had accomplished in this regard. To this question the latter seems to have had no response.³⁰

The supporters of non-cooperation persuaded the others to join

them in forming a delegation to go immediately to the high commissioner. Thus, Musa Kazim al-Husayni, 'Umar al-Baytar and 'Isa Bandak, along with the three Istiqlalists 'Abd al-Hadi, al-Madi and al-Hajj Ibrahim, met Wauchope for two hours as the others waited. The delegation submitted a memorandum demanding the government curtail land sales and Jewish immigration or face a programme of non-cooperation. The high commissioner responded firmly that to restrict land sales would be a violation of the mandate's policy with which he was charged and was contrary to the public good. He added that he thought it unjust to prohibit a person from selling his property. After the meeting, the delegation returned to the others in the Arab Executive office where they held a second meeting and decided to convene a national congress on 26 March to form a consensus on the policy to be pursued.³¹ According to British intelligence, Jamal al-Husayni intended to counterattack by exposing Opposition politicians' contacts with Zionists and to call for an eighth national congress. This held out the promise of the Majlisi faction regaining control of the Arab Executive.³²

In the weeks leading up to the national congress in Jaffa, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* gave the approaching event slight coverage.³³ The Istiqlalists and *al-'Arab*, by contrast, began to intensify their promotion of the idea of non-cooperation.³⁴ The party held a closed meeting on 2 March in which it formulated a statement dictated to the press by phone.³⁵ It outlined the high commissioner's response and called on the public to take the scheduled public meeting in Jaffa as an opportunity to show the British that 'South Syria' demanded independence and rejected Jewish immigration and land purchases.³⁶ British intelligence followed particularly the Istiqlalists' efforts among students and boy scouts in Nablus to organize support for non-cooperation.³⁷ At the same time, various factions held secret parleys in Haifa, Nablus, Jenin, Jaffa and Jerusalem as leaders prepared for the big meeting in Jaffa and the Arab Executive sent out invitations to potential delegates.³⁸ *Al-'Arab* alleged that certain circles tried to stop or postpone the national congress. It characterized these efforts as part of an agreement between notables and the government, and pointed out that the Arab Executive was slow to send invitations for the congress.³⁹

On 26 March, the council of the Istiqlal Party met just two hours before the Jaffa national meeting. Even at this point, the party leaders differed over what a non-cooperation programme specifically required.

With the time of the meeting approaching, they resolved to submit a memorandum recommending a programme to be implemented in progressive stages. In the first and immediate stage, non-cooperation was to be undertaken on three levels: first, social non-cooperation entailing the boycott of government and Jewish-Arab banquets, parties and associations; second, political non-cooperation requiring leaders to abstain from serving on government boards and councils and non-payment of taxes; and third, economic non-cooperation entailing boycotting British and Jewish goods and reducing purchases of merchandise subject to customs tariffs and excises.⁴⁰

The proposals were mild, requiring minimal sacrifice on the leadership's part and inflicting little pain on the government. A very small proportion of government revenue actually derived from agricultural and municipal taxes. The agricultural tax had been, in any case, remitted because of crop failures and collapsing commodity prices between 1930 and 1934.⁴¹ The overwhelming predominance of government revenue came from import tariffs and, given Palestine's reliance on imported manufactured goods and foodstuffs, the proposal to economize on these could have only miniscule effect on the government budget, which was then moving into surplus.⁴² Further, no civil servants were required at this stage of civil disobedience to resign their positions. The resolution was therefore much more of a means of expressing anger at the government than of penalizing it, although it implied that greater sacrifice could well be demanded as the confrontation with the government intensified. The idea of non-cooperation produced a salient response confirming the expansion and deepening of Palestinian political awareness.

The extent to which public opinion was moved by both the Istiqlalists' campaign and the sense of alarm from Jewish immigration and land sales can be gauged by the size of the gathering at the Jaffa public meeting. The Arab Executive invited 1000 representatives, including civil servants, town and city mayors, and other urban and rural notables. In the event, between 500 and 600 people packed the Apollo cinema hall. A government account described them as 'towns-men and villagers of all classes and parties'. The expression 'all classes' is likely to be an exaggeration, but, by every indication, the representatives came from a broad spectrum of the Palestinian political leadership, including members of the Arab Executive, the SMC, the mayors of the main towns and rural notables.⁴³

This of course also meant that 400–500 invitees did not attend. Even so, the meeting still dwarfed any previous national congress and revealed a growing sense in the leadership that it was coming under scrutiny for its policies. Its size also suggests two other perceptions on the part of the Palestinian leadership. First, many rural notables and lesser *‘ayan* believed that their involvement in national policy was necessary, either because a civil disobedience programme threatened their status and interests or simply because they wanted unified support for the government’s policies. This also signalled a deep change in the character of Palestinian political life. Rural leaders who had historically represented the interests of their local clients to the state felt obliged to engage what can be safely called national public opinion, and new associations whose members subscribed to a nationalist worldview largely dictated the terms of the debate. Second, that so many delegates were invited evinced the paralysis of the urban political elite and its need for a broadly based endorsement of any position it might take.

The widest schism dividing the meeting ran between the Opposition mayors and their supporters on one side and Hajj Amin al-Husayni’s following on the other.⁴⁴ His partisans jammed the front rows of the hall, struggling to be close to him. They chanted, ‘Hajj Amin is the nation, and the nation is Hajj Amin!’ When discussion began, speakers raised the questions of what was meant by non-cooperation, who would bear its burden, and whether it was feasible. Although some were content to form a committee to study the matter, Ahmad al-Shuqayri declared that the non-cooperation campaign was necessary. Going beyond the Istiqlalists’ proposal, he not only called for the programme to begin with the non-payment of agricultural taxes, he also suggested that Raghib al-Nashashibi resign as mayor of Jerusalem. ‘Asim Sa‘id, the Opposition mayor of Jaffa, then informed the gathering that he had received word by telephone from al-Nashashibi that he was prepared to resign if the nation (*al-ummah*) called for it, a position that Sa‘id also took up. It was clear to everyone present that the speaker was implying that Hajj Amin should also resign from his posts as president of the SMC and chief mufti of Jerusalem. General disorder broke out in the meeting as the mufti’s supporters shouted that he would not resign because the nation did not want him to and because he was not a civil servant.⁴⁵

Hajj Amin then addressed the meeting, saying he had received

word that non-cooperation 'was an attempt at entrapment' intended to force his resignation. He described his long service to the national movement and explained that he was not a civil servant, adding that if the time came when the national movement would benefit from his resignation he would not hesitate to do so. It was apparent, however, that he had no intention of stepping down.⁴⁶ After further argument and discussion, the meeting adjourned and reconvened in the afternoon. The Istiqlalists submitted their plan for a phased programme of non-cooperation, but none of them either addressed the meeting or attended the second session.⁴⁷

The party's interpretation of the events was published four days later in *al-'Arab*. By its account, the nation had embraced the idea of non-cooperation as a weapon for the defence of its existence. 'Mid-wives' operating openly and behind the scenes, however, had killed the idea and non-cooperation was 'born dead'. The article explained that the party leaders saw that 'the cinema hall was the scene of manoeuvring and an arena for trickery', and that there was no prospect of deciding a programme of action. *Al-'Arab* also published what it termed 'the so-called resolutions'. These were essentially those the Congress of Youth had proposed a month previously, and they represented a continuation of the Arab Executive's policy.⁴⁸ Even the assembly's call to resign from government boards and boycott government functions was a demand for the most minor sacrifice.⁴⁹

A British report later noted that the Arab Executive made no efforts to implement its resolutions.⁵⁰ For the Istiqlalists, the non-cooperation programme they presented at the Jaffa meeting was a trial balloon, testing the leadership's readiness to confront the British authorities and the strength of public opinion. After the meeting in Jaffa confirmed the inability of the leading politicians to formulate a strategy, the Istiqlalists intensified their efforts to organize an independence movement based on civil disobedience that would function outside the structures of the larger leadership.

Bypassing the Established Leadership

Within two days of the non-cooperation congress, Istiqlal Party leaders had submitted applications to local authorities to set up party branches in Nablus, Haifa and Jaffa.⁵¹ A Palestine police report of April 1933 claimed that the party had difficulty attracting members and that it was 'unlikely to be able to exercise any considerable con-

trol over the general masses, who in Palestine submit to persons of influence, Sheikhs and elderly leaders and politicians'.⁵² This display of the British officials' faith in the notable politicians is as revealing about the Palestine administration's outlook as it is about the party. As the Istiqlalists began in the next month to open branches, they intended to counter the influence of exactly those politicians.

The Nablus branch held its first meeting on 1 April and a month later opened a centre in the clubhouse of the recently formed Nablus athletic union.⁵³ By 21 May the Jaffa branch had opened a centre near the *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* office.⁵⁴ The press reported four days later that the Gaza activists had formed a branch of the party, submitted its papers to the district commissioner and were searching for an appropriate clubhouse. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* readers learnt on the same day that the party's Haifa branch had been formally constituted. It had taken as its headquarters a section of the Arab Bank, of which Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim was president. The paper claimed that the branch was attracting the city's youth.⁵⁵ Thus, the party expanded in conjunction with its campaign for non-cooperation, while it made its reputation on a confrontational policy that set it apart from – if not against – the Arab Executive and Congress of Youth.

The Palestinian leadership's first opportunity to show its resolve in the boycott of government receptions came a month after the Jaffa congress on the occasion of the visits of Minister of State for Colonies Cunliffe-Lister and Lord Allenby during the same week. Allenby, commander of the Palestine campaign during the war and a former high commissioner of Egypt, came to Palestine as a guest of the government to speak at the dedication of the new YMCA building in Jerusalem. The Istiqlalists had submitted their memorandum on non-cooperation to the Arab Executive with this occasion in mind. They also designated the date of the YMCA dedication as the day for the next party rally, which would be held in Nablus.⁵⁶

Articles in *Al-Arab* began to expose the degree to which Allenby's leadership of the Palestine campaign in the First World War was identified with the idea of the Crusades in British popular culture. They also claimed that Allenby was to blame for the betrayal of the wartime promises of independence made to the Arabs. At the same time, the articles continued to portray the YMCA as a missionary, sectarian and imperialist institution. That John Mott, the American president of the YMCA worldwide, was an organizer of the 1927

Jerusalem missionary conference and was to be a guest at the dedication, gave credence to these assertions.⁵⁷

Al-Arab harshly criticized a group of Opposition notables who attended a reception for Colonial Secretary Cunliffe-Lister near the time of the dedication ceremony, though they justified their action by claiming to have delivered a petition of protest. The newspaper depicted them all as staunchly pro-government. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* defended them, thus revealing that the Opposition's enthusiasm for non-cooperation extended only as far as the programme could be employed to undermine the Majlisi faction.⁵⁸ *Al-Arab's* harshest criticism was reserved for the only Muslim among the four Arabs who attended the YMCA dedication ceremony. This was 'Adil Jabr, the founder of *al-Hayat*, who had taken a government post in the Bureau of Antiquities 'after the Supreme Muslim Council disappointed his hopes' of employment. *Al-Arab* referred to him as 'Adil' Jabr, anglicizing his name by replacing the initial letter 'ayn with an *alif*.⁵⁹ Jabr had offered to give a lecture on the Dome of the Rock, leading *al-Arab* to speculate that he had probably gained Humphrey Bowman's patronage, and that Jabr should see his wealth increase.⁶⁰

The meeting the Istiqlal Party held in Nablus to coincide with the YMCA dedication was the fifth of its rallies. The party distributed invitations in advance and prepared seats for 1000 in and around the Nablus cinema. In addition to protesting against the visits of Allenby and Cunliffe-Lister, the speakers criticized what *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* called 'the traditional leadership'.⁶¹ According to British intelligence, many students and scouts 'but very few notable personalities' attended the rally.⁶² At the same time the Arab Women's Association staged a protest in Jerusalem against Allenby, which was characterized by nationalist speeches. A new development was the participation of peasant women in the demonstration.⁶³

The emergence of Istiqlal as a nationalist political party was one manifestation of a set of generalized changes in associational life in Palestine in this period. Every association had to face the issue of its relationship with the British authorities and the question of to what extent it would be culturally Arab. With the development of organized athletics accelerating in 1932 and 1933, this applied particularly to Palestine's scout troops and athletic clubs. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah* was notable for its coverage of soccer matches in this period, and it began in April 1933 to feature articles by a sports correspondent.⁶⁴

It was partly for their political and cultural aspects that the athletic clubs received the attention they did. As mentioned earlier, the Istiqlalist Party branch in Nablus was located in the Nablus athletic union and Zu'aytir noted in a lecture there that the function of the union was not only to promote athletics, but also to present lectures and plays.⁶⁵ Zu'aytir's lecture was not simply a cultural event; it was openly a call to resistance and was delivered only days after the Istiqlalists submitted their non-cooperation proposal to the Arab Executive. He cited Sa'd Zaghlul, Jawaharlal Nehru and the Irish nationalist Eamon DeValera as examples to be emulated.⁶⁶ British intelligence learnt of the contents of the speech and the police report reflects the unease that Zu'aytir's remarks engendered.⁶⁷

The athletic clubs that civil servants frequented were also points of entry for government influence, as exemplified by the many civil servants who attended the party the Jaffa Islamic Athletic Club gave in honour of 'Azmi al-Nashashibi, a scout leader, assistant inspector of schools and later administrative district commissioner of Jaffa.⁶⁸ It was almost axiomatic that where there was government patronage, there was factional rivalry for its benefits. Thus, the partisan contention that blighted other Palestinian associations of the time also extended to the athletic clubs. For example, in Jerusalem the Rawdat al-Ma'arif Club was affiliated with the SMC's school of the same name, whereas Opposition leader and mayor Raghīb al-Nashashibi was honorary president and financial supporter of the Arab Athletic Club.⁶⁹ Dr Da'ud al-Husayni, one of Jamal al-Husayni's brothers, served as president of the Palestine General Athletic Union formed in 1933.⁷⁰ Significantly, the Istiqlalist Nablus Athletic Union was not one of the seven clubs comprising the union.⁷¹ The Istiqlalists considered it close to a violation of the resolution to boycott government functions when a British official was scheduled to referee the annual games sponsored by Hajj Amin al-Husayni.⁷²

The question of maintaining the independence of national organizations provoked bitter controversy in Nablus at the end of May. The government's education department in the city distributed invitations to athletic games sponsored by the high commissioner. Akram Zu'aytir prepared a declaration calling for a boycott and he, with some of the youth of Nablus, circulated it, collecting 600 signatures.⁷³ The boycott split the politically aware elements of the city. When Zu'aytir entered a Nablus coffeehouse with the declaration, a supporter of the games

and 'the clique that he led' forced him out of the establishment with shouts and threats. However, he was cheered when students from al-Najah School wrote graffiti around the city in support of the boycott. The district's inspector of education, who was a friend of Zu'aytir, considered the boycott a personal insult. He mobilized notables and teachers to counter the boycott and even prepared cars to take people from surrounding villages to the games. Zu'aytir was deeply disappointed by the high turnout for the event.⁷⁴ It is revealing that the British administration regarded the attempted boycott as significant enough to report to the Colonial Office in London.⁷⁵

At roughly the same time as Arab athletic organizations were taking on a life independent of British sponsorship, a similar trend, in which the Istiqlal Party was also involved, was evident in independent Arab scouting organizations. The party mobilized some of its support in Gaza through the 'Umar al-Faruq troop, which Khadr al-Ja'farawi led. This was attached to the Gaza YMMA branch that constituted an Istiqlalist stronghold. Similarly, the Khalid Ibn al-Walid troop under Mamduh al-Sukhn's leadership was part of the Istiqlalist Nablus athletic union.⁷⁶ By August 1933, Ibrahim al-Shanti was leading a scout troop in Qalqilya where his extended family was centred.⁷⁷ The Istiqlalists also maintained ties with the Kashshaf al-Sahra' (desert scout) troop in Haifa.⁷⁸ 'Atif Nurallah, formerly on the Istiqlalist *al-Yarmuk's* editorial staff, and the poet Mutlaq 'Abd al-Khaliq led the troop and published a scouting magazine also called *Kashshaf al-sahra'*. In addition, its press published political fliers.⁷⁹ The Congress of Youth absorbed the troop in June 1932 when it affiliated to the new Haifa Arab Youth Society.⁸⁰ The troop's leadership overlapped to some extent also with the membership of the Haifa YMMA, of which Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam was president.⁸¹

Camping trips were occasions to invite noted nationalists to mix with the scouts, and troops staged plays depicting events in Arab and Islamic history.⁸² Some scouting units displayed a pronounced militarism in addition to their fascination with Gandhi's methods of civil disobedience. Shortly after the Jaffa congress on non-cooperation, an Iraqi scout troop toured Palestine, Syria and Egypt promoting Arab unity.⁸³ The troop's leader told the press, 'The Director of Education in Iraq, Mr Sami Shawkat [successor to Sati' al-Husri] is among those most drawn to the idea of Arab unity and spreading militarism (*al-jundiyah*) among students, imbuing them with its spirit. It is he who

said that we must excel in the art of death in order to live.⁸⁴ Only a few months later, Shawkat delivered a speech in Baghdad entitled, 'The Profession of Death', advocating militarism in nationalist education.⁸⁵ It attracted considerable attention and was consistent with the image of Iraq as the 'Prussia of the Arabs'.⁸⁶ British intelligence took note of the reception that the Istiqlal Party held for the Iraqi scouts and remarked on the scouts singing songs about 'the combat of colonization and the West, restoration of the Arab glory, the force of arms, [and] the attainment of absolute independence.'⁸⁷

The Istiqlal Party in no way monopolized either the idea of pan-Arab nationalism or the desire to establish nationalist associations that were free of British control. The scouting enthusiasts' pan-Arab orientation was just as pronounced as that of the SMC's Rawdat al-Ma'arif troop and others that accepted sponsorship from King Faysal. One supporter suggested that the Rawdah troop adopt the Iraqi *sidarrah* as its headgear.⁸⁸ In July, 14 Arab boy scout troops and one girl scout troop took part in the opening ceremony of the Arab exhibition, which was mounted to promote and market goods produced in Arab lands.⁸⁹ The names of many of the units, such as Ramlah's Tariq Ibn Ziyad troop, indicate that they were attached neither to missionary schools nor to the government, and at least two were under Istiqlalist leadership.⁹⁰ Within days, the press reported that the Congress of Youth intended to unify the country's independent Arab scouting organizations in a federation.⁹¹

It is particularly significant that it was through the Congress of Youth that Arab nationalism and intense resistance to British cultural domination were expressed. Its leaders and a proportion of its membership, as active or aspiring civil servants, professionals and merchants, were unsettled by the idea of civil disobedience that the Istiqlal Party promoted. The Istiqlalists nonetheless articulated beliefs that were widely spread and deeply held in the ranks of the Congress of Youth and other Palestinian associations. As we shall see in the next chapter, by the summer of 1933 these associations were not far from confronting the Palestine government. For this reason, despite the Istiqlal Party's small membership and the short reach of the Palestinian public sphere, it could force the established leadership to convene the public meeting on non-cooperation. It was also for this reason that the Istiqlalists' activities provoked the government and the Majlisi faction into adopting measures to weaken the party.

Repercussions in Baghdad

Between January and March 1933, the Istiqlal Party approached the summit of its influence in Palestine. It asserted its leadership within the YMMAs and initiated a programme of non-cooperation against the mandatory government. It succeeded in convening a public meeting in March that unintentionally put pressure on Hajj Amin to resign from his position as president of the SMC. Thus, the party severely undermined the agreement that Wauchope and the mufti had made, and threatened Wauchope's plan to guarantee the colonial order in Palestine through Hajj Amin's mediation with the Muslim population. More broadly, it constituted a challenge to the tacit compact formed over time between the Palestinian leadership and the government. The last thing Wauchope needed at that point was to give the Istiqlalists a forum for their anti-mandate agenda at the anticipated pan-Arab congress in Baghdad.

The prospect of the pan-Arab congress being convened in Baghdad was as unwelcome to the Colonial Office as it was to Sir Francis Humphrys, the British ambassador in Baghdad. At the end of 1932 he reported to London that King Faysal intended to give the congress 'discreet encouragement' and that he, Humphrys, had argued against it, cautioning Faysal that Turkey and Iran would see the congress as a threat. He encouraged the king to restrict the agenda of the congress to cultural and economic matters and to exclude political topics, especially Syrian independence and the question of Palestine. King Faysal, much like Hajj Amin al-Husayni during his preparations for the Islamic Congress in 1931, agreed to the conditions.⁹² Needless to say, the king's assurances directly contradicted the expectations and intentions of Shakib Arslan and Istiqlalists organizing the congress.

These restrictions notwithstanding, Lancelot Oliphant of the Colonial Office wanted a stiffer response. Acknowledging that Humphrys could not veto holding a congress in an ostensibly independent state, Oliphant explained, 'we feel that you could certainly have gone further than you did in cold-watering it – with your accustomed charm.'⁹³ Dr Brodetsky of the World Zionist Organization at the same time lobbied officials in the Colonial Office to inform King Faysal that attacks on Zionism during the congress would not be tolerated.⁹⁴ His demands evidently carried weight, for officials in London encouraged Humphrys to assure Brodetsky that he had warned Faysal away from allowing Palestine to be discussed.⁹⁵ In Jerusalem, High Com-

missioner Wauchope was afraid not only of the congress being convened in Baghdad but that the organizers, if their plans were thwarted in Iraq, might try to move the venue to Jerusalem. He therefore reminded officials in London, 'I have consistently emphasized that the Istiqlal Party is gaining in strength and increasing the anti-British feeling in this country.'⁹⁶ Urged both from London and Jerusalem to stop the congress, Humphrys, by March of 1933, had prevailed upon Faysal to postpone the congress at least until the following autumn.⁹⁷

When a new government was formed in Baghdad on 19 March 1933, it took the form of another coalition cabinet including palace and opposition politicians. The opposition members paid for their seats by accepting the Anglo-Iraqi treaty in its unaltered form, recognizing Great Britain's strategic and economic prerogatives in the country. In return for backing away from his longstanding opposition to the treaty, Yasin al-Hashimi gained the post of finance minister, and his colleague in the National Brotherhood Party, Rashid 'Ali al-Kaylani, became prime minister.⁹⁸ *Al-'Arab* expressed the hope that this cabinet would obtain true independence for Iraq and reported that press restrictions had been lifted, allowing nearly 20 newspapers the government had shut down to reopen.⁹⁹ By April the government had begun to allow political parties to open new branches.¹⁰⁰ There can be little doubt that this was the opposition's reward for consenting to the treaty.

As late as 28 March, Rashid Rida could report to Shakib Arslan that al-Hashimi and the Baghdad committee had agreed to hold the congress in autumn 1933 in Baghdad.¹⁰¹ The Palestinian Istiqlalists, though, soon sensed what had transpired. In a speech at a party rally in April, 'Ajaj Nuwayhid declared, 'I want from Iraq, its government, its people, and its parliament an Arab nationalist policy that supports Palestine even if cabinets fall.'¹⁰² Al-Hashimi sent letters to the Jerusalem and Baghdad committees, and to the palace to announce his withdrawal from the Baghdad committee. The Istiqlalists learned within a few months that Humphrys had put pressure on King Faysal to withdraw from the congress and that this had led al-Hashimi to invent excuses to vacate the congress committee. Darwazah wrote much later that the Jerusalem committee was shocked because everything had been done in consultation with al-Hashimi.¹⁰³ With King Faysal's death the following September the initiative for the pan-Arab congress also died.

It appears likely that al-Hashimi's abandonment of the congress was the price of his cabinet post. With more certainty, it can be said that the interests generated by the new states and administrative entities Great Britain and France had created in the postwar period trumped any grand schemes for Arab unity and independence. British officialdom, exercising final control over the repressive and productive capacities of these emerging states, had considerable resources to bring to bear against nationalist activists. But local Arab elites, whatever the depth of their nationalist sensibilities, also frequently acted to undercut the activists, or just as frequently became ensnared in the opportunities for wealth, status and security that the colonial system created.

The Wadi al-Hawarith Affair

Apart from warning the Colonial and Foreign Offices against allowing the pan-Arab congress to be held in Baghdad, Wauchope sought other ways to weaken the Istiqlal Party's influence in Palestine. One night in November 1932, when Chaim Arlosoroff was in Wauchope's home for a private dinner, the high commissioner expressed his concern that the Istiqlal Party was steadily gaining strength. Arlosoroff responded that the Istiqlalists should be easy enough to control because they were as involved as the rest of the leadership in land transfers to the Jews. This led the high commissioner to ask if it were possible to get proof of this. Arlosoroff assured him that the evidence could be found with adequate investigation.¹⁰⁴

It was the policy of the main Zionist land-purchasing agency, Palestine Land Development Company (PLDC), not to release the names of Arabs who assisted in the acquisition of land.¹⁰⁵ This policy was enacted with the knowledge that land brokers and sellers would be frightened off if they sensed an excessive risk of being exposed before the Palestinian public.¹⁰⁶ Wauchope thus appears to have turned to Palestine government officials to locate proof that Istiqlalists, and 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi in particular, had facilitated the transfer of land to the Zionists. In January 1933 the assistant director of development, Lewis Andrews, wrote to Hilmi al-Husayni, the district officer of Tulkarm, a former employee of the land department and a brother of Jamal al-Husayni.¹⁰⁷ Andrews recalled that 'Sometime ago you informed me that Ouni Bey Abdul Hadi received £P 2700 from the Jews for letting the Wadi Hawarith lands be put up for

auction by the courts.' He asked, 'Do know if it is possible to prove this?'¹⁰⁸ Al-Husayni responded that although he could not verify the amount, he had been told that 'Abd al-Hadi had in fact received money for the PLDC's Yehoshua Hankin.¹⁰⁹

The land in question, Wadi al-Hawarith (in Hebrew 'Emek Hefer), comprised about 40,000 dunams (roughly 10,000 acres) in the Tul-karm subdistrict.¹¹⁰ Its primary owners were members of the Tayan family, who typified the urban Levantine merchant elite that had accumulated extensive landholdings by the end of the Ottoman era. This wealthy Christian family originated from Beirut and by the time of the land's sale its members resided also in Cairo, Jaffa and Buenos Aires.¹¹¹ The Jewish National Fund (JNF) acquired the land from the Tayans at a public auction in 1929, a purchase financed with a pledge from Canadian Zionists of £P 200,000 (\$1,000,000) to be paid over ten years.¹¹² According to Raya Adler (Cohen), it was the third largest area acquired by the JNF during the mandate, and it gave Jews contiguous ownership of land in the coastal plain, although most of the plain was owned by private Jewish investors rather than Zionist bodies.¹¹³ Despite much of the land being swampy, it was in the heart of the citrus belt and consequently was of great commercial value. Roughly 1000 members of the Hawarith tribe, former Bedouins who had settled there in the last century, inhabited the land, of which they cultivated parts and grazed livestock on others.¹¹⁴

The Hawarith Arabs stubbornly refused to leave the land after its sale despite government offers of compensation. The long legal process by which the JNF obtained the Arabs' eviction, culminating in 1933, was highly publicized and was an important contributor to the increasing militancy in Palestinian associations in the summer of that year.¹¹⁵ 'Abd al-Hadi in fact represented the settled Arabs of Wadi al-Hawarith in their unsuccessful court appeal against eviction in late 1932, shortly before Lewis Andrews enquired about the Istiqlalist leader's alleged involvement in the land transfer.¹¹⁶

A court issued the final eviction order to the Wadi al-Hawarith residents on 15 June 1933, just days before the Istiqlalists held in Acre one of their last rallies. With the announcement of the eviction, Akram Zu'aytir and the Nablus branch of the party helped to organize a strike in the city and sent a telegram of protest to the high commissioner. The party's Nablus and Gaza branches sent declarations of protest to the press, and Istiqlal Party leaders in Jerusalem

mobilized party branches to send delegations to support and bring bags of grain to the evicted Arabs. The evictions also provoked a generalized response from Palestinian Arabs and, in the early summer of 1933, Wadi Hawarith was the lead story in the Arabic press. The Congress of Youth, various youth groups and the Palestine Communist Party issued press statements, telegrams and fliers protesting against the evictions, in addition to raising money to support the Bedouin.¹¹⁷ The assistant governor of Jerusalem warned editors of the Palestinian press that he would close down their papers if they did not moderate the tone of their coverage.¹¹⁸ The events in Wadi al-Hawarith provoked anger and public meetings even in Iraq.¹¹⁹

Against the backdrop of the Wadi al-Hawarith evictions and obviously as a counterattack against the Istiqlal Party after the non-cooperation congress, Jamal al-Husayni wrote an anonymous article in the Damascus paper *Alif ba'* accusing 'Abd al-Hadi of acting in the interests of the Zionists when he represented creditors against the former owners of the Wadi al-Hawarith lands in a law suit. The outcome of the suit was to force the Tayan family to sell its land at public auction, thus facilitating its purchase by the JNF. Apparently, to ensure that readers in Palestine saw the article, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* reprinted it three days later.¹²⁰ The previous October, a letter published in *Filastin* had raised the issue more obliquely but at the time it did not generate much of a public reaction.¹²¹

'Abd al-Hadi defended himself in two articles, the first in *Filastin* in October 1932 and the second in August 1933 in *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*.¹²² In the second and more detailed of these he explained that the mortgage on the land, issued in 1880, had been parcelled out prior to the war, so several parties subscribed to it. These included the original mortgagor, Henri Estrangin, a French resident of Marseilles, a German-owned bank in Jerusalem and a Jewish merchant from Jerusalem named Ishaq Ariyeh. In 1923 the heirs of Estrangin and Ariyeh brought a legal action demanding full repayment of the mortgaged amount by forcing sale of the land at a public auction through the government's office of liquidation. The Tayan family of Beirut sued to prevent the liquidation of the property. 'Abd al-Hadi had formerly served as lawyer for the German bank, but with its bankruptcy became the lawyer for its official receiver (*sandik tabiq iflas*),¹²³ the British subject Richard Hughes. The heirs of Estrangin gave power of attorney to two heirs of Ariyeh and to Richard Hughes.

Because he had represented the bank, 'Abd al-Hadi represented all the creditors in the suit brought against them by Tayan, including the heirs of Estrangin and Ariyeh, and the bank's official receiver. 'Abd al-Hadi claimed that his task was confined to verifying the debt, and he thus could not be accused of any unethical action.¹²⁴

This version of events accords with the court record of the case.¹²⁵ In addition, though 'Abd al-Hadi probably did not know it, Yehoshua Hankin had not yet begun trying to purchase the land at the time of the suit in March 1924, so 'Abd al-Hadi could not have been acting in the Zionists' interests when he took on the case.¹²⁶ However, in his October 1932 article in *Filastin*, he recalled that he appealed against the decision, which had been rendered in the Tayans' favour. His successful appeal to the Supreme Court in Jerusalem took place in April 1926. By 'Abd al-Hadi's account, his involvement with the Wadi al-Hawarith lands ended at that point. He added, 'As for carrying out the mortgage contract, offering the mortgaged land for sale, and selling it to the Jews, I had no involvement in that at all.'¹²⁷

This last statement is at least partially false. On 3 September 1928 an attorney for Michel Tayan, M. Eliash, petitioned the chief execution officer of the district court to stop the sale of the Wadi al-Hawarith lands while the previous court decision was under appeal to His Majesty in Council.¹²⁸ In a response to Eliash's petition, dated 23 September 1928, 'Abd al-Hadi reviewed the previous judgments, pointing out that he had requested the sale of the Wadi al-Hawarith lands according to the decision of the Nablus land court, published 26 July 1926. He concluded: 'Therefore I request the continuation of the sale of the aforementioned land according to the law.'¹²⁹ It thus appears that 'Abd al-Hadi had lied when he claimed that he was not involved in bringing the land to auction.

By that time, September 1928, Yehoshua Hankin had secretly obtained a signed contract from members of the Tayan family for the sale of their land.¹³⁰ To some Palestinian Arab observers, even then the sale seemed imminent and they presumed that it would be the Zionists who purchased the land. In an interview with Michel Tayan in the same period, *Filastin* remarked on the rumoured determination of the Tayan family to sell the Wadi al-Hawarith lands. The newspaper acknowledged that if the Zionists acquired Wadi al-Hawarith, they would achieve unbroken control of the coastal plain from Jaffa to Acre.¹³¹ 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi must have been at least as aware as the

Filastin journalists of the consequences of the sale of this land when he filed his response to Eliash's petition, only five days before the interview was published.

'Abd al-Hadi, having become involved in obtaining the recovery of his clients' loan prior to Yehoshua Hankin's attempts to negotiate with the Tayans, may have felt obligated to see his undertakings through and could not very well reverse legal claims he had earlier made before the courts. As he pointed out in his August 1933 response to his accusers, if the prospect of Zionist purchase prevented mortgaged land going to auction, then no company or individual could ever be justified in recovering their loans by forcing sale of the property, and no lawyer could ever in good conscience represent them. His remarks illustrate the way in which many otherwise mundane civil and commercial actions became political and nationalist issues in a country undergoing colonization. One could imagine that 'Abd al-Hadi had entered a broad grey area on the edge of what he and other nationalists considered ethical behaviour, and rather than attempt to explain the perplexing legal decisions leading to the choices he made in 1928, he chose instead to hide them.

Another document in the Wadi al-Hawarith file of 'Abd al-Hadi's law papers appears to be a draft of a contract between 'our client' and a second party identified only as Tayan. The first term of the contract states, 'The second party [Tayan] undertakes to cancel the appeal to His Majesty in Council.' It thus seems that the Tayan of the contract was Michel Tayan. The second article states that the first party will pay £P 14,000 to Tayan on signing the contract, and in this context it mentions 'Mr Hankin' (*al-Khawajah Khankin*).¹³² The draft, much of it barely legible, is undated, unsigned and bears no letterhead. It may not even have been written by 'Abd al-Hadi or have ever been put into effect. Strictly speaking, it does not prove that he facilitated the purchase. At the very least, the document suggests that 'Abd al-Hadi attempted to orchestrate a deal between Hankin and Tayan.¹³³

There was at least one other episode of land sales in which 'Abd al-Hadi was said to have been involved.¹³⁴ In addition, Zionist sources several scholars cite name three other Istiqlal Party leaders as being involved in land sales, namely Subhi al-Khadra', Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and Mu'in al-Madi. The sources are not, however, documentation of sales but lists compiled by the political wing of the Jewish Agency to discredit the Palestinian Arab leadership during the 1936–

39 revolt. The documents contain only general information about the location of the lands that were allegedly sold, and no information regarding the dates of the purported sales, the prices paid or the precise functions of the Palestinians named in the documents.¹³⁵ These sources should be treated with the greatest caution.

In an article explaining the reasons for the formation of the Istiqlal Party, Subhi al-Khadra' stated, 'those whose business it is to come forward for public service expose themselves to campaigns and attacks, *both justified and unjustified* [emphasis added]. We are prepared to bear our share of that without fear or trepidation.'¹³⁶ His comments suggest that some Istiqlalist leaders might have been as guilty as the larger Palestinian political elite of seizing opportunities created by the colonial administration and the colonization process. But, confronted with the rapid gains made by the Zionist movement in the early 1930s, they were obliged to accept the consequences of their actions and inactions, and to steer a new course.

The Istiqlal Party in Decline

In summer 1933, as the youth groups' politicization increased, the Istiqlal Party began an unsteady process of dissolution. On 17 June it held what turned out to be its last public rally until the next autumn. This took the form of a commemoration in Acre of the three 'martyrs' executed for the murders of Jews during the 1929 riots, as called for by the Arab Executive.¹³⁷ That the Istiqlalists, who so sedulously denigrated sectarianism, would observe such an occasion may have been an indication of the party's weakness. Those involved in the protests in Nablus two years previously had then ignored the Arab Executive's call for a strike to observe the occasion. British intelligence noted that, although the speeches at the 1933 Acre gathering were strongly worded, 'attendance was not as large as anticipated'.¹³⁸ The reason for the light attendance might have been that rumours were already circulating that 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi had acted as a broker in the Wadi al-Hawarith land sales. The abandonment of the Istiqlalists by pan-Arab politicians in Baghdad and the financial difficulties the party faced at the time – two perhaps related developments – also must have taken some of the starch out of the party. In addition, a dispute between Ibrahim al-Shanti and Hashim al-Sabi' over the latter's insistence on publicizing the names of al-Shanti's relatives who were involved in land transfers had split the Jaffa branch.¹³⁹

The Palestinian Istiqlalists continued to seek support from pan-Arab nationalists, delegating Akram Zu'aytir to attend a congress of nationalist youth in Qarna'il, Lebanon at the end of August. The congress, which established an organization called the League of National Action, demonstrated that the pan-Arab nationalism of educated youth, frequently influenced by prewar nationalists, was by no means confined to Palestine, but was widespread among secondary school students and young adults in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. The conferees passed resolutions that reflected the outlook of the Istiqlal Party in Palestine, expressing its intention to work for the complete independence and unity of all the Arab lands and endorsing the principle of non-cooperation with the imperialists.¹⁴⁰ Two years later, it became the leading force in a general strike and a series of demonstrations in Syria that forced a change in French policies.

At the beginning of September 1933 King Faysal died while on a state visit to Europe. Stunned and stricken with grief, Zu'aytir returned to Palestine just as 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi and 'Izzat Darwazah were leaving for Baghdad to represent the Istiqlal Party at the king's funeral.¹⁴¹ There they met Yasin al-Hashimi and the rest of the pan-Arab congress committee and learnt how the British ambassador had kicked the legs from beneath their plans.¹⁴² 'Abd al-Hadi and Darwazah returned to Palestine after their ten-day trip wearing Iraqi *sidarahs*. In interviews, they endorsed Faysal's son and successor King Ghazi highly and spoke of his commitment to his father's dream of Arab unity.¹⁴³ Asa'd Dagher and Shakib Arslan were quick to put out the same message through the press shortly after Faysal's death.¹⁴⁴ Despite the claims of the pan-Arab activists, the question of Iraqi-Syrian unity faded as an element of policy with the death of Faysal.

The Arab unity issue had never been much of an asset to the Istiqlal Party in terms of mobilizing the Palestinian public. Much more effective was its uncompromising criticism of the British administration and of Palestinian politicians who advanced their careers by cooperating with it. However, by mid-summer 1933, Palestinian newspapers, apart from *al-Arab* and *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, were generally ignoring the Istiqlal Party. *Al-Arab* had lost much of its feisty tone in its coverage of the Palestinian leadership and the party held no public rallies until after 'Abd al-Hadi and Darwazah had returned from Baghdad. Then the issue at hand was not Arab unity but the increased rate of Jewish immigration into Palestine. Within

two weeks, activists had organized the first of two popular demonstrations on a scale previously unknown in Palestine.

Conclusions

The Istiqlalists' programme of non-cooperation proposed only a minimal expression of protest against the Palestine government's policies. However, the proposal implied in principle that members of the Arab political elite should be prepared to walk away from their government posts to effect a change in the government's policies if the public demanded they do so. The mere implication jolted to life the seemingly dead Arab Executive. Within the executive, an unintended consequence of the non-cooperation programme was that it provided Opposition politicians with a means to embarrass the Majlisi faction. That outcome constituted further evidence that competition for government patronage and efforts to deny its benefits to one's rivals largely drove the country's political activity. Struggles for access to government, for salaries as civil servants and for the prestige of serving in the legal and administrative systems not only carved a deep gulf through the Arab Executive, but also affected the rapidly developing Arab cultural and sporting associations.

In scouting units and soccer clubs, British advisers initiated the rising Arab elites – Christian and Muslim – into the culture of the mandatory government. Young Arabs confirmed their elite status by that process of acculturation, and they perceived that the passage through British-supported associations facilitated obtaining the perquisites of government employment. The most aggressive advance of Anglo-Protestant culture took place in the openly missionary YMCAs, and the identification of Christianity with the modernizing and civilizing missions of the mandate was implied in less than subtle ways. This fact, together with the high proportion of Christian Arabs working in government positions and a surplus of educated young Arabs, intensified sectarian rivalry. To close this cleavage, the Istiqlalists proposed another – one that ran between the nation on one side and foreign control and its supporters on the other. The party's support for the establishment of scout troops and athletic clubs that expressed Arab nationalist culture and that rejected government sponsorship amounted to another dimension of the non-cooperation programme and the demand for independence.

Yet, even Arab nationalists in ostensibly independent Iraq found

that British officialdom had the capacity to raise the cost of commitment to full Arab independence and unity to a prohibitively high level. The pressure the British ambassador in Baghdad exerted, with the high commissioner in Palestine's encouragement, stopped the pan-Arab congress being convened and removed a vital source of support for the Istiqlal Party. A second and perhaps more important factor in weakening the party was the public perception (probably accurate) that 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi had facilitated the sale of the Wadi al-Hawarith lands to the JNF. This shows how property transactions and bankruptcy proceedings, which in a sovereign state would have had little nationalist meaning, constituted tests of loyalty in a society subject to imperial control and undergoing colonization. The Wadi al-Hawarith affair also made it clear that the financial resources the Zionist movement could mobilize for land acquisition were huge compared with what Palestinian Arabs could assemble. More generally, Palestinians faced a structure of incentives that penetrated their careers, finances, social contacts, athletics and cultural pursuits and that favoured the Zionist movement, the government and the maintenance of the politics of notables.

Yet, the attempt to launch the non-cooperation programme also made it clear that activists, articulating their programme in clearly nationalist terms, could in fact wield public opinion in a way that threatened the relationship between the mediating elites and the government. This was evident in the high commissioner's and Jamal al-Husayni's urgent attempts to undermine the party. It was also evident in the Arab Executive's convening of the national conference in March 1933 to consider non-cooperation and finally to approve it on a symbolic level. Such actions by the government, the Majlisi leadership and the Arab Executive were all directed at a public. The core element of the Palestinian Arab public was comprised of those educated in Western-style curricula, and they appear to have been the generally younger and more urbanized segment of politically aware Palestinians. However, the March non-cooperation congress, which assembled a large number of rural notables along with the urban leadership in a forum to debate a countrywide policy, indicates that the notable's rural constituencies also demanded that the question of non-cooperation be taken seriously.

All this strongly suggests that the weak but emerging public sphere to which the Istiqlalists had devoted so much attention did in fact

sustain public opinion as a force in Palestinian Arab politics. Indeed, the Istiqlal Party fell victim to the same national public opinion it endeavoured to form. In a longer view, the non-cooperation programme, along with the Istiqlalist rallies and press campaign that brought it about, represented a collective attribution of threat and an attempt to define what was possible in confronting it. As we shall see in the next chapter, this collective sense of peril and opportunity became an operant mechanism in an episode of popular mobilization that took place in the autumn of 1933.

Chapter 7

The Demonstrations of 1933

In the preceding chapters I have shown that one of the longstanding fears of British officials in Palestine – a stratum of liberally educated colonial subjects, nationalist in outlook and substantially under-employed – did in fact materialize. This group identified with the Arab nationalism the Istiqlal Party expressed but collectively showed less enthusiasm for the party's programme of civil disobedience. In the present chapter I will explore the circumstances under which many younger nationalists who were apprehensive of the programme of non-cooperation moved into the camp of those who resolved to confront the government. This shift, occurring in the summer and autumn of 1933, was prompted in part by the eviction of the Wadi al-Hawarith Arabs in August, which symbolized the progressive loss of land to the Zionist movement and Jewish private enterprises. More directly, the rapid acceleration of Jewish immigration from Europe inspired the transition to confrontation. A second anxiety that had a long tradition with British officialdom in Egypt and India was the threat to colonial governance that came with the dislocation of peasants and their migration to cities. In this chapter I investigate the consequences of this development in Palestine, especially after 1932.

The convergence of these two developments brought a short series of demonstrations in autumn 1933, during which it became clear that the nationalist activists who organized the protests depended on peasants and urban workers to express outrage at the British administration for its enablement of Zionist colonization. The demonstrations also signalled the public sphere's extension beyond the political elite and the rising generation of politicians its modernist education and worldview defined. This politicization of Palestinian wage labourers and agriculturalists rapidly intensified over the course of the next three years and culminated in a general strike and revolt in 1936. As we have seen in earlier chapters, by the end of the 1920s nationalism

had become an important resource for the political elite and educated youth, some of whom explicitly contrasted nationalism against sectarianism, which they associated with colonial governance and its worldview. This raises the question of whether, with the advent of what can safely be termed popular politics, nationalism continued to gain currency in the political discourse.

Answering this question is helped considerably by Hajj Amin al-Husayni, the most adroit practitioner of the sectarian strategy on the Palestinian Arab side of the relationship, having been out of the country in the summer of 1933 and until immediately after the demonstrations. Departing in May 1933 on a fund-raising tour that took him and his associates to Iraq, Iran and India, he solicited contributions to relieve the financial strain that had burdened the permanent office of the Islamic Congress since its beginning.¹ Hajj Amin was therefore unable during his absence to engage in mediating activities and it would seem that an important part of the imperial machinery was temporarily incapable of operating at its intended level. In this chapter I contrast the effects of his absence during a critical period against those of his return to his usual functions and thus gauge the efficacy of the sectarian system.

In this chapter I also consider the strategies Hajj Amin, his faction and others of the political elite adopted in the face of a successful mobilization of wage labourers and agriculturalists in an episode of contentious politics. Did the Palestinian political elite perceive that Islamic identity and the sectarian style of advocacy would best speak to Palestinian labourers who intruded upon the domain of the political elite? Did the politicians see in Arab nationalism a set of symbols that were capable of facilitating collective action, or perhaps even capable of restraining and controlling it?

Immigrants, Migrants, and Labour Markets

High Commissioner Wauchope was personally committed to creating and expanding the Jewish national home. This was reflected in his administration's policy on Jewish immigration, especially since Hitler's ascension to the chancellorship of Germany in January 1933 and with the increasing hostility in Poland towards its Jewish citizens. Norman Bentwich later recalled that Wauchope 'realized that Palestine would be a principal country of refuge; and he was prepared to help the Jews and the Jewish Agency all he could in the admission of

refugees'.² As noted in Chapter 5, Jewish immigration into Palestine had increased by multiples since 1931, the beginning of the Fifth 'Aliyah – with 4075 in 1931, 9553 in 1932 and 30,327 in 1933. According to a report Colonial Secretary Cunliffe-Lister submitted to parliament, 14,905 Jewish immigrants entered the country in the first eight months of 1933. Of these, 2389 arrived in July and 2387 in August, thus corresponding in time with the highly publicized evictions of Arabs from Wadi al-Hawarith.³ This implied that 15,000 more would enter the country in the remaining four months of 1933.

In 1922 Jews comprised 11 per cent of Palestine's population and by 1931 this had increased to 17 per cent. Between 1931 and 1936 the Jewish population rose to nearly 28 per cent of the country's total.⁴ Such an increase would have been apparent even if the newcomers had been evenly distributed throughout the country, but they were heavily concentrated in the coastal cities of Tel Aviv and Haifa.⁵ In 1922 Tel Aviv's population was less than half that of neighbouring Jaffa's 32,524. By 1931, Tel Aviv's almost entirely Jewish population had reached 46,101, and Jaffa's was 51,866, of whom 7700 were Jews. The Jewish population of Haifa accounted for a quarter of the city's total of 24,634 in 1922 and nearly a third of its 50,403 in 1931.⁶ By 1939 the Jewish population exceeded half the city's total.⁷ For Palestinians living in Jaffa, the rapid demographic and spatial expansion of Tel Aviv on the city's southern border was material evidence of the Yishuv's economic and political strength. The same can be said of Haifa, where Jewish and Arab neighbourhoods pressed against one another and, in some areas, mixed neighbourhoods came into being.

Palestinian Arabs in increasing numbers experienced first hand the Yishuv's growth because their own populations in these two cities (and others) also grew. The rise in numbers of Arab residents was due to their natural increase and especially to the migration of rural populations to these cities in search of jobs in the wage-labour market. Labour migration and demographic growth were aspects of the concentration of capital and merchant activity in the port cities that had begun the previous century and that intensified especially in the early 1930s. Jobs in the port of Jaffa and the construction boom in Tel Aviv exerted a particularly strong attraction over Palestinian peasants in rural areas and also brought in workers from Egypt and the Hauran region of Syria and Transjordan.⁸ George Mansur, an Istiqlalist and later one of Palestine's most effective Arab labour

organizers, wrote in 1937 of 'thousands of unskilled [Arab] workers in Jaffa' who 'sleep in tin huts or in the open'.⁹

A similar situation prevailed in Haifa where the government's port expansion, completed in 1933, had attracted large numbers of workers. Porters, lightermen, stevedores and carpenters found work in the port, at its railway and oil pipeline terminals, and at the Iraq Petroleum Company's refinery in the city.¹⁰ A boom in residential construction, brought on by Jewish immigration as it was in Jaffa, provided another source of employment for Palestinians of rural origin. In Haifa's old city workers slept in makeshift shelters in the streets. On sandy flats on the city's eastern side, a shantytown grew up and housed a population of several thousand. Lacking adequate municipal services like refuse collection or sewerage, the area became known among Palestinians as *al-Mantanah*, 'the rotten-smelling place', and among the British as 'Tin Town' for its huts made of discarded petroleum containers.¹¹ In both Jaffa and Haifa, many if not most of the residents of these shantytowns resided temporarily and regarded their villages as their permanent domiciles. Thus the official population statistics likely understate the number of Palestinians present in the cities and their environs at any one time.¹²

The simple concentration of Jews and Arabs in the same metropolitan areas alone contributed to the politicization of Palestinian Arabs, but the growth of these urban populations also brought pronounced economic tensions. The demand for housing in Haifa drove rents up sharply. One press article reported that a home that rented for £P 50 in 1932 cost £P 120 in 1933.¹³ This rise in rents must have affected tradesmen, clerks and minor merchants much more than subsistence labourers. More important for Palestinian workers was the competition for jobs and a more aggressive attempt on the part of Zionist labour organizations to realize what they termed 'the conquest of labour' or 'Hebrew labour'.

The conquest of labour was one of the central tenets of Labour Zionism. In its abstract and ideal form the term meant the transformation of the Jewish individual through labour and the reconstitution of the Jewish people as a nation possessed of a non-exploitative class structure. In practice and over time it came to mean the exclusion of Palestinian Arabs from employment created by Jewish capital.¹⁴ Jewish workers found representation of their interests primarily through the Histadrut (the general federation of Jewish unions),

which the socialist Mapai (the Workers' Party of Israel) dominated from 1930. David Ben-Gurion, who had come to the country from Poland prior to the war, headed both organizations. He argued that it was in the long-term interest of Zionism to educate and organize Arab workers in separate, non-Jewish labour organizations so that Arabs would not price Jewish workers out of jobs in government and non-Jewish enterprises. An 'educated' Arab worker, Ben-Gurion believed, would see that it was in his interest to find solidarity with the Jewish working class rather than seek support through a mis-conceived nationalism.¹⁵

In practice, Histadrut leaders had little enthusiasm for organizing Arab labour. Although the Histadrut had created an affiliated organization, the Palestine Labour League, as its vehicle for activity among Palestinian Arabs, by 1934 it could claim little success in recruiting an Arab membership. Histadrut's principal goal thus remained the exclusion of Arab workers from Jewish-owned enterprises and the attainment of preferences for Jewish workers in government jobs and contracts.¹⁶ In 1928, the Zionist organization had lobbied for a quota of 50 per cent of employment in public works for Jews, arguing that Jews contributed 50 per cent of government revenues and that a higher proportion of Jewish than Arabs workers were permanent rather than seasonal workers. The government put in place a wage scale on public works projects that provided the highest pay to unionized Jewish workers, followed by non-union Jewish workers, then by urban Arab workers and reserving for rural Arab workers the bottom pay scale. By this system, the lowest paid non-union Jewish worker was paid the wage of the highest paid rural Arab worker, and the lowest paid Jewish union member earned (at 280 mils a day) nearly twice the wage of the highest paid Arab rural worker.¹⁷

The goal of the conquest of labour became more distant in the 1932 to 1935 period when the immigrants of the Fifth 'Aliyah brought an unprecedented amount of investment capital with them into Palestine. This influx of capital resulted in a pattern of economic contraction and expansion that was the reverse of what most areas of the world experienced in the period. Palestine's economy contracted in the middle and late 1920s when much of the world's economy experienced a boom. The Fifth 'Aliyah, however, coincided with the Great Depression, and Palestine's economy grew in a period of global stagnation.¹⁸ Not only was the total level of investment entering the

country at a higher level than at any time before, but the amount from private sources – as opposed to what the World Zionist Organization distributed – constituted the overwhelming preponderance of investment capital. The new immigrants who brought in the capital were predominantly from the German and Polish middle class, and many had come to Palestine because other destinations were closed to them.¹⁹ These middle-class investors and professionals did not typically identify with the socialist ideals of the Second and Third 'Aliyahs, and many had not long been committed to Zionism generally. They were thus not commonly inclined to support the struggle for the conquest of labour, and the attraction of hiring cheap, non-unionized Arab labour proved strong. Consequently, the proportion of Arabs among workers in Jewish-owned citrus groves and building projects rose sharply between 1932 and 1936.²⁰

The Histadrut increasingly responded in the 1930s by forming gangs to picket Jewish-owned enterprises and to expel Arab workers by force. Although these had little effect on the Jewish enterprises' pattern of hiring, the episodes were reported in the Arabic press, including *al-Arab*, which expressed concern over reports of armed Jewish 'defence groups'.²¹ The sharpening contention between Zionists and Palestinians was manifested not only in the circumstances of the urban labour market, but also in those of Palestine's rural areas, where Palestinian peasants experienced a level of impoverishment that pushed them into the cities.

The British authorities showed rather little interest in the welfare of the Palestinian peasantry – the large majority of Palestinians – until the riots of 1929.²² Authorities in Jerusalem and London then began to associate the causes of the violence with the rural Arab population's discontent, especially the shortage of cultivable land as Jewish land purchases and immigration advanced. The new attention given to rural affairs reflected colonial administrators' traditional belief that order was to be maintained by keeping the peasantry on the land. The governments of Great Britain and Palestine produced in the two years following the riots a series of four reports investigating land issues and the state of the peasantry.²³

In 1930, two Palestine government officials, W. J. Johnson and R. E. H. Crosby submitted a report on conditions in Palestinian villages. Their report focused especially on the effects of the Great Depression and noted that the same collapse of commodities prices

experienced in other areas of the world also afflicted Palestine. In 1930, the prices of Palestinian wheat, barley and olive oil fell to about half those of the previous year. The report estimated that in a year the net income of the average rural Arab family fell from £P 27.5 to £P 16.5, whereas the cost of living for the average family was between £P 26 and £P 29. The government at the same time imposed on the peasants a regressive system of taxation at high rates. The tithe and animal tax typically took 19 per cent of the peasants' net income, but because the 1928 Commutation of Tithes Ordinance based the tithe on the average cash value of a peasant's gross product over four years, the effective rate for 1930 was around 32 per cent of the peasant's *net* income. The rate was actually much higher than this when the rural property tax (the *werko*) was included.²⁴ It would be difficult for even the most detached observer not to comment that the system of taxation showed an appalling level of exploitation inflicted by a supposedly enlightened administration.

Consistent with the deflationary trend that characterized the Great Depression, there was a shortage of coin among the peasants, who were required to pay taxes in cash.²⁵ The Palestinian cultivators paid usurious rates of interest and were chronically indebted even at the best of times, but by 1930 they also experienced a shortage of credit, which was similarly characteristic of deflation. Johnson and Crosby wrote that the moneylenders – merchants who converted the peasants' produce into cash – held more wheat and olive oil than they could sell, and thus could not advance loans.²⁶ Hence, it is evident that, although Palestine's economy registered growth, it was by no means immunized from the hardships of the depression, and these disproportionately affected the rural agricultural population.

Another critical shortage that Palestinian agriculturalists faced was of land. The 1930 investigation into Arab landlessness by John Hope Simpson and the 1931 and 1932 reports by Lewis French (formerly of the Indian Civil Service) on agricultural reform found that land in the hill districts was already insufficient to meet the needs of the people resident there.²⁷ In 1937, a Royal Commission of Inquiry, echoing French's earlier assessment, surmised that unless there were radical changes in land use and agricultural methods, Palestine would be unable to support its population.²⁸ In no small measure the shortage of agricultural land was the result of the natural increase of the rural Arab population.²⁹ Questions of the extent of landlessness among the

peasantry and the degree to which it directly resulted from Jewish land purchases have yet to be answered satisfactorily, mainly because the Palestine government never completely surveyed the land and failed to compile reliable statistics on its use.³⁰ It is, however, certain that Jewish land acquisitions contributed to a larger process in which capital-intensive production began to replace extensive cultivation by the peasantry. Arab investors were deeply involved in the process. Lewis French asserted by way of example that, over a ten-year period, at least 30 per cent of the land in the hill areas of an unnamed subdistrict passed from peasant to Arab capitalist ownership.³¹

Johnson and Crosby summed up the peasant's position in 1930, stating, 'It would appear that the farmer's position is serious, and that something must be done to relieve at once his immediate difficulties and in the near future to raise his income to the former level.'³² The government offered tax relief through the 1928 remission of tithes ordinances, but a drought in 1932 and 1933 largely offset its effects.³³ The government at last replaced the tithe with a rural property tax in 1935 – a reform the 1937 Royal Commission claimed reduced the peasants' tax burden by 70 per cent in some cases.³⁴ While the administration could claim some credit for belatedly reforming an onerous system of taxation, it displayed little support for Palestinian cultivators or investment in their future productivity. The government provided no systematic social security, welfare or relief. It provided only seeds and short-term loans after disasters such as locusts or the earthquake of 1927, and some employment in public works.³⁵ Its modest attempts to support the Palestinian peasant included establishing cooperative societies in villages between 1930 and 1936 and reforming the practice of imprisonment for debt in 1931 and 1932.³⁶ Only in 1935 did the government establish an agricultural bank to replace that of the Ottoman government – and then with great reluctance. The bank made no loans until 1936.³⁷

These harsh rural conditions forced peasants into the developing wage-labour market in cities.³⁸ It is therefore important to recognize that the workers could not always accurately be described as 'urban', and the distinction between peasant and worker was rarely clear. Sarah Graham-Brown illustrates this point by describing two months in the working life of a young peasant from the hills of Nablus in 1938. An employer recruited him from his home village to work for 20 days in Qalqilya; he returned to his village for three days and then

worked for one month in Haifa, after which he returned to his village to buy grain for his family.³⁹ His experience suggests that workers retained their ties to rural areas even when the cash economy drew them into cities. This is particularly significant with regard to the 1936–39 revolt, which began in a sustained way in urban areas but rapidly spread to the countryside.

Another development in Palestine's economy had profound effects on relations between the Palestinian political elite and the workers. This was the surge in the production and export of citrus – especially oranges – in the early 1930s.⁴⁰ Citrus accounted for 46 per cent of Palestine's merchandise exports in 1932; by 1935 this had risen to 84 per cent.⁴¹ As capital-intensive agriculture, citriculture required large investments in preparing the land and irrigation; oranges needed about 15 years cultivation before a new grove yielded in profitable quantity. It was therefore an unviable enterprise for the average peasant and only investors with access to large amounts of capital could engage in it.⁴² The grove owners relied on wage labour on a seasonal basis in the fields, and workers also found employment in crate making, packing, local transport and shipping. The picking and shipping out of oranges took place between November and March, with the peak season for hiring occurring in December, during the time of ploughing and planting in grain-growing areas.⁴³

In the early 1930s, Jewish and Arab grove owners were responsible for Palestine's citrus production in roughly equal proportions.⁴⁴ Among the Arab political elite, Ya'qub al-Ghusayn of the Congress of Arab Youth owned extensive groves near Ramlah. Alfred Rok, a Catholic of Jaffa, and 'Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar of Jerusalem, both political allies of Hajj Amin al-Husayni, were also leaders of the industry.⁴⁵ In another example of involvement in the plantation economy, though not in citriculture, Jamal al-Husayni, with his brother-in-law Musa al-'Alami, owned banana groves in Beisan and Jericho.⁴⁶

Investing in citrus exporting was one way Palestinians with access to capital could benefit from the general economic expansion while others faced destitution. Under these circumstances, some Palestinian Arab grove owners may have felt that their interests aligned more closely with importers in London and Glasgow – or even with Jewish grove owners – than with the labourers in Wadi Hanin, Jaffa and Haifa. Alfred Rok, for example, went to Great Britain immediately

after the 1933 demonstrations to form a joint Palestinian Arab and British shipping company. He secured a commitment of 40 steamers for the year's orange season from the participating British company and was named the company's Jaffa representative. *Filastin* reported that most of the Palestinian Arab orange merchants had contracted with the new company and received shares in proportion to the amount of fruit they shipped.⁴⁷ At the time of the demonstrations, merchants in Palestine fully expected an exceptional orange season.⁴⁸

In the autumn of 1933 Palestinian workers in the port cities must have seen things very differently from the Arab investors. Nadav Halevi's research indicates that the level of Jewish immigration simply overwhelmed the economy's ability to absorb the new arrivals. This is hardly surprising given that the immigrants who arrived between 1932 and 1936 equalled 90 per cent of the Jewish population in 1932. Despite the large amount of capital that was invested in Palestine's economy, per capita product within the Jewish sector of the economy remained roughly unchanged between 1932 and 1936.⁴⁹ It is difficult to imagine that Arab workers would have benefited significantly more from Jewish investment than Jewish workers, especially since the generally more highly skilled and educated immigrants would have been more employable and frequently brought their own capital.

In November 1933 the government of Palestine estimated that there were about 16,500 Palestinian Arabs seeking work, among them 5000 workers who claimed to be skilled and 1000 women. It was then approaching the peak season of employment. At the same time, the government counted 1100 Jewish unemployed.⁵⁰ This meant that in a season of high employment, more than 15 times as many Arabs as Jews were seeking work. Wauchope admitted the next year that 'the statistical section of the Palestine Department of Immigration is not satisfied that the system on which figures have been collected in the past is altogether satisfactory'.⁵¹ The admission does not seem to imply that Arab unemployment figures should have been revised downwards. This can be surmised from the fact that the Palestine government had adopted a self-congratulatory attitude it was quickly forced to rethink. In October 1933, the administration reported rising wages for skilled workers and 'a scarcity of labour in the towns especially in the Port of Jaffa'. The report noted particularly that 5000 Arabs were working in Jewish-owned orange groves and that Jewish construction was thriving.⁵² However, Wauchope, two months later

and with the demonstrations in his recent memory, felt obliged to modify the government's sanguine appraisal. He then wrote to the Colonial Office describing the economic expansion in the country and added, 'But there is an important distinction to bear in mind as to this prosperity: the immigration of Jews though of benefit to the country as a whole, is not of benefit to many Arabs.'⁵³

Neither the divergent experiences of workers and investors in the Palestinian economy nor the competition between Arabs and Jews for jobs and resources fully explain the 1933 demonstrations, although these factors became much clearer within the next two years. The central issues in 1933 were political and national as they were also in the events leading up to the uprising in 1936. To many Palestinian Arabs the flood of Jewish immigrants in the final four months of 1933 signalled the imminent or eventual loss of their homeland.

The Immigration Issue in the Arabic Press

The matter of immigration had never been absent from the Palestinian press, and over the course of 1932 and 1933 there were numerous indications that journalists feared the worst. *Al-ʿArab*, for example, expressed anxiety over suggestions in the Hebrew press that there be an exchange of the Arab and Jewish populations of Palestine and Iraq.⁵⁴ Another article in the Istiqlalist journal speculated that Palestinians were likely to suffer the same fate as the indigenous peoples of the Americas and Australia.⁵⁵ *Al-ʿArab* reported that Chaim Weizmann had warned that Arabs 'will be struck with a harsh reality in only five years, since they will see a Jewish nation capable of standing before them and saying to the English, don't fear for us, we can stand on our own'.⁵⁶ In mid and late August 1933, while Istiqlal Party activities were confined to issuing occasional declarations, press coverage of immigration increased.⁵⁷ At the same time, government awareness of the effect of the press even on peasants in rural areas was growing. A police report noted, 'It must be stated that in shaping public opinion the press is becoming increasingly an important factor. The Arab reading public is on the increase and some peasants in their villages read newspapers. That this is so, is perhaps obvious from the fact that the public now supports three daily papers.'⁵⁸

The Majlisi faction's *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyyah* took a provocative stand on Jewish immigration and criticized the Arab Executive's lack of action in the crisis.⁵⁹ On 24 and 25 August it carried a two-part

series on Jewish immigration and the Jews of Germany. The author claimed that Zionism and world Judaism had provoked Hitler into oppressing the German Jews, initiating the flight of some to Palestine, and called on the Arabic press to alert people to the danger of the Judaization of the country.⁶⁰ The article was representative of *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah's* position in August and September.⁶¹ Perhaps as important as the content of the article was the matter of who wrote it. The author, Emil al-Ghawri, was a young Christian who had recently returned from the United States after completing a graduate programme at the University of Cincinnati. Within five months of the appearance of these articles, he had become a leading youth organizer of the Majlisi faction, serving on both the Congress of Youth executive and the Arab Executive. He soon began to publish a nationalist youth magazine entitled *al-Shabab*, which the Palestine government repeatedly felt compelled to close because of its anti-mandate tone.⁶² Al-Ghawri's article and others in *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* suggest that the nationalist youth of the Majlisi faction, and the Congress of Youth in particular, were becoming increasingly assertive during Hajj Amin al-Husayni's absence from the country.

On 25 September, as the press campaign raged, the Congress of Youth executive met in its office at the Muslim-Christian Association in Jaffa. There it decided to issue a declaration of protest against the government's immigration policy, to send a letter of protest to the high commissioner, to call on national bodies and the press to address the problem of 'the Judaization of the country' and to call on Arab youth societies to hold continuous public meetings to inform people of the crisis. Most significantly, the Congress of Youth insisted the Palestine Arab Executive convene a meeting on 8 October to work out a plan to combat Jewish immigration.⁶³ Thus, the Congress of Youth, organized primarily by veteran politicians to restrain young nationalists, took the initiative in putting pressure on the Arab Executive to take action.

Six days later, on 1 October, the Arab Executive met to decide its response, without its Istiqlalist members who had withdrawn because of the executive's failure to implement the non-cooperation programme. The participating officers decided to convene the Arab Executive one week later to discuss holding an eighth national congress – the first since 1928 – to formulate a policy.⁶⁴ The implication of this was that the current Arab Executive was too weak to take a

decisive position. It probably also indicated that at least some in the Arab Executive wanted to stall any decision that would bring about a confrontation with the government. An anonymously written editorial in *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* on 3 October expressed concern about the proposed congress and noted that it would take at least two months to resolve issues of representation and run elections, whereas the crisis called for immediate action.⁶⁵

At the same time, a group of youths in Jerusalem held the first of several meetings to discuss the immigration problem. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* offered them encouraging words on the day of the meeting, but did not identify who participated.⁶⁶ This was a significant development because up to this point Jerusalem had not been a centre of nationalist activism. An anonymous writer in the paper had earlier expressed the city's need for a nationalist youth organization, noting that the Rawdah Club, affiliated to the SMC's school, was confined to athletics.⁶⁷ Since nothing suggests a link with the Istiqlal Party and since Jerusalem was never one of the party's strongholds, the group's appearance suggests the start of what British intelligence would refer to two years later as the 'independent young men groups'.⁶⁸ By the end of 1935 this informal network of nationalist youth had gained considerable sway over policies of the Majlisi and other major factions.

Within a week of its formation, the group in Jerusalem had circulated a petition in the city addressed to Musa Kazim al-Husayni that hundreds of people signed. It expressed opposition to holding an eighth national congress and asked the Arab Executive to issue a decisive statement of protest signed by its members and president. It also asked the executive to issue another statement signed by all members explaining the danger the country faced. Most importantly, it suggested that the Arab Executive lead popular demonstrations of protest. On 5 October, three days before the petition was published, the Congress of Youth held a large meeting in Jaffa. The gathering issued a statement including the same demands.⁶⁹ In this period, among those attending the Congress of Youth's leadership meetings were Ya'qub al-Ghusayn, Edmund Rok, Sa'id Khalil and the older nationalist Salim 'Abd al-Rahman. Al-Ghusayn and 'Abd al-Rahman were both closely identified with the Majlisi faction.⁷⁰

In Nablus a group of the city's youth also circulated a petition demanding that the Arab Executive take a firm stand and call for a

full strike in Palestine. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah's* correspondent in the city reported that all the clubs and coffee houses were abuzz with the immigration issue. He added that many people were pleased with the new political activism of the youth and were talking of forming an Arab political club to meet their needs.⁷¹ This again suggests that the Istiqlal Party was not at the forefront of these activities and that the Majlisi faction, in the absence of Hajj Amin, looked approvingly on these developments. As the Arab Executive meeting scheduled for 8 October approached, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* published an editorial signed only with the initial *alif* – perhaps Emil al-Ghawri – informing the executive that its former policy had failed. It urged the youth and the leadership to come to Jerusalem to 'support' the Arab Executive.⁷² There can be no doubt that elements in the Majlisi faction and Congress of Youth had usurped the Istiqlal Party's former function as the main political association to goad the Arab Executive into action. The notable difference was that no one in the Majlisi faction or Congress of Youth was calling for a policy that seemed to imply resignation from government posts.

This was also apparent to government observers. Police reports recorded Congress of Youth leaders on the matter but noted also that 'Istiqlal and leaders of the pro-Council factions, while by no means less concerned, are considering the question quietly, but seriously.'⁷³ There were other indications at this time of the Congress of Youth's strength and assertiveness. During the press campaign against immigration, a new Congress of Youth branch opened in Safad, taking its usual form as an Arab Youth Society.⁷⁴ More significantly, the Ramlah YMMA announced it would host the fifth congress of YMMAs.⁷⁵ Ramlah was Ya'qub al-Ghusayn's centre of influence and he mobilized support there through the local YMMA, the 'Abbasiyah scout troop and the Society of Arab Youth. The YMMAs' centre thus moved away from the Istiqlalist stronghold in Haifa where Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim was president of the national central committee. British intelligence anticipated that al-Ghusayn would be elected president at the coming congress and noted, 'the combination of the [YMMA] with the Young Mens [*sic*] Executive under one leader can only increase the strength of this element'.⁷⁶

The Istiqlal Party's activities lagged behind events at this time. When the office of the Congress of Youth held its 25 September meeting, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi and 'Izzat Darwazah had just returned

from King Faysal's funeral in Baghdad and the party remained in its inactive state. In a closed meeting the Istiqlalists resolved to call a public rally at a Haifa coffee house in which party members would inform people of the dangers of immigration.⁷⁷ According to *Filastin*, the Istiqlal Party's assembly in Haifa on 7 October attracted a crowd of several hundred.⁷⁸ 'Izzat Darwazah later described it as the most effective of the Istiqlalist rallies, and both his and Akram Zu'aytir's accounts claim that the Arab Executive felt compelled to match the Istiqlalists' efforts at organizing anti-immigration protests.⁷⁹ Neither account so much as mentions the activities of the Congress of Youth, which was in fact the strongest – though not exclusive – source of pressure on the Arab Executive at that time. Both writers overstate the Istiqlal Party's influence and obscure the fact that the young nationalists who began to exert a pull over Palestinian politics were not an extension of any one faction or organization.

During a closed meeting on the night of their public addresses in the Haifa coffee house, the Istiqlalists received a telephone call from Jerusalem informing them that the Arab Executive had decided to hold a demonstration in Jerusalem on 13 October – a decision the party immediately endorsed.⁸⁰ In a meeting of 22 of its 48 members, the Arab Executive formally announced the demonstration the next day and the young activists in Jerusalem began to make preparations, inviting rural notables to their planning sessions.⁸¹ The Arabic press reported that many youths from Tulkarm, Ramallah, Lydda and Jaffa were expected to come to Jerusalem for the demonstration.⁸²

It is evident that the initiative for staging the demonstrations came primarily from independent young nationalists and less directly from Congress of Youth leaders. A second factor, the importance of which in 1933 is difficult to gauge but which had become immensely important by 1935, was the matter of workers' grievances, especially in the port of Jaffa. Palestinian Arab workers in the early 1930s were, with increasing frequency, using strikes as a way of gaining concessions from their employers, sometimes seeking support from the Histadrut.⁸³ By 1936 these workers were also using strikes to protest against the mandatory government's policies, so economically motivated strikes were being merged with nationalistically motivated ones. Organizers of the 1933 demonstrations who were also major citrus growers and exporters, like Ya'qub al-Ghusayn and Alfred and Edmund Rok, may well have anticipated disruptions of work in the

port areas and therefore hoped to stage controlled demonstrations in October in the hope that they could be brought to an end before the citrus season got underway in November.

A few days before the demonstrations, Hathorn Hall, the officer administering the government in Wachope's absence from the country, summoned Musa Kazim al-Husayni to a meeting in which the former ordered the Arab Executive to call off the demonstration. The Arab Executive president adamantly refused. He then consulted members of the Arab Executive, including 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi as representative of the Istiqlalists, and Ya'qub al-Ghusayn, Edmund Rok and Sa'id Khalil speaking for the Congress of Youth. All of them supported Musa Kazim Pasha's position.⁸⁴ Such resolve had been rarely seen in the Arab Executive's past.

The Majlisi leaders clearly wanted large numbers to turn out for the demonstrations and they encouraged the participation of students. An informant for the Jewish Agency whose son studied at the SMC's Rawdat al-Ma'arif related that the school would be closed for the demonstrations. The informant also visited his friend Musa Sa'id Darwish, who was considered a close associate of the mufti. Darwish told him that the situation in the country was dangerous and that there could be serious disturbances unless the government gave the situation more attention. He also said that two-thirds of the Arab Executive members at the meeting felt compelled to swear to march in the demonstrations lest Majlisi members published their names as traitors. Jamal al-Husayni tried to get the Jerusalem merchants to go out on strike but had less success with them. A small number agreed, a few agreed to close their businesses until noon, but a considerable number refused to go out on strike at all.⁸⁵

While all evidence indicates that the Majlisi faction supported the demonstrations, it seems that the Opposition attempted to stop them. An informer for the Jewish Agency from Hebron reported that Raghib al-Nashashibi summoned village leaders to Jerusalem and asked them to ignore the Majlisi calls for demonstrations. He warned them that the Husayni faction was leading them into trouble and would not come to their aid if they were gaoled. All those who attended agreed to follow his directions.⁸⁶ The channels of influence that ran from the government through the urban leadership to the rural notables and finally to the peasantry clearly became operative in the days before the Jerusalem protest.

As the time for the demonstration approached, the government issued an order prohibiting public gatherings in the Jerusalem district for a period of three weeks.⁸⁷ The governor of the southern district summoned editors of the Arabic and Hebrew press to warn them against publishing anything that might endanger public security or advocate illegal demonstrations.⁸⁸ The government's threats deterred neither the organizers nor the participants.

The Jerusalem Demonstration

The demonstration took place in Jerusalem after Friday prayers as scheduled. 'Abd al-Hadi wanted to lead the marchers but Majlisi organizers disagreed.⁸⁹ In the event, the demonstrators came out of al-Aqsa Mosque with Jamal al-Husayni, 'Abd al-Hadi, Mughannam Mughannam and Alfred Rok in the front rank. One unnamed witness, whose estimates of the crowd exceeded those of other observers by several times, later told British investigators that demonstrators were shouting 'Allah el Akbar' [*sic*].⁹⁰ Other than this, there is no record of slogans or of speeches during or before the demonstrations.

British reports estimated the number of marchers at 1500 to 2000 in a crowd that changed in composition as it meandered through the Old City. A group of veiled women among the demonstrators was variously reported to have numbered 20, 30 or more.⁹¹ A Zionist source placed the total number of marchers much higher, at 5000.⁹² A CID report later described the crowd as 'composed mainly of town-dwellers and many of the effendi class'.⁹³ When the police tried to break up the procession with riot batons, the crowd pelted them with rocks and shoes, 'and similar missiles were also being thrown from the roofs of houses'.⁹⁴ Six demonstrators or bystanders and five police were injured.⁹⁵ Nablus went on a total strike during the Jerusalem march and large numbers of armed police patrolled the streets.⁹⁶ Afterwards some Arab Executive members met at Musa Kazim al-Husayni's house and decided to hold the next demonstration in Jaffa on 27 October. They charged the Jaffa Muslim-Christian Association and the Congress of Youth with planning the demonstration.⁹⁷

The Jerusalem demonstration was an expression of anger directed at the government by a substantial segment of politically aware Palestinians. But the lack of participation by large numbers of fellahin or Arab workers and the confinement of the protest to a small area of Jerusalem and to a strike in Nablus indicate that it represented a

limited expression of popular politics. Senior government officials also do not seem to have seen the Jerusalem demonstration as particularly threatening: Despite the defiance of the ban on public gatherings, none of the marchers was arrested. The next round of demonstrations was, however, of a markedly different character.

The Jaffa Demonstration

While the city's Muslim-Christian Association and Congress of Youth held preparatory meetings in the week before the demonstration in Jaffa, the southern district governor summoned the leaders of both organizations and presented them with letters to the effect that the demonstration was prohibited.⁹⁸ When Wauchope returned to Palestine on 25 October he immediately met Arab Executive representatives, including Musa Kazim al-Husayni, Jamal al-Husayni and 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, and informed them he was willing to hold discussions with them but that they were forbidden to demonstrate. He tried to find them an honourable alternative by suggesting they submit a petition to the district governor instead, who would in turn pass it to Wauchope.⁹⁹ He also told them that legal immigration would continue 'and would continue to be regulated in accordance with the absorptive capacity of the country'.¹⁰⁰

The pressure of public expectation on the leadership to follow through with the demonstration was such that there was no talk of calling it off. Whereas some of the Jerusalem Opposition politicians had discouraged participation in the previous demonstration, it seems that the Opposition leaders in Jaffa had no such reservations.¹⁰¹ *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* published the programme, which stated that Musa Kazim Pasha would lead the procession from the Great Mosque after Friday prayers. He was to be followed by members of the Arab Executive, religious leaders, the Congress of Youth, the Istiqlal Party, the YMMAs, merchants, women's groups and others.¹⁰²

The day before the demonstration the press reported many soldiers patrolling the streets of Jaffa and stringing up barbed wire.¹⁰³ Delegations from around Palestine, as well as from Syria and Transjordan, began to arrive in the city and to attend the meetings the Congress of Youth and Muslim-Christian Association held. According to *Filastin*, these delegations included leaders from rural areas near Hula and Safad, 200 Arabs from Wadi al-Hawarith, 600 from the Bani Sa'b sub-district and representatives of tribes near the border with Syria.¹⁰⁴

It is significant that the Congress of Youth coordinated the task of keeping order in the demonstrations with 'crew captains' (*ru'asa' al-bahara*),¹⁰⁵ the captains and owners of lighters – the open barges that carried cargo and passengers from ships to Jaffa's wharf.¹⁰⁶ A police report on the demonstration likewise referred to participation of the 'boatmen, an unruly and rough element', in addition to other labourers, 'whose feelings had been worked up by the vernacular press'.¹⁰⁷ The lightermen, along with the stevedores, doubtlessly witnessed the increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants entering Palestine through its ports and, as importantly, the boatmen represented an emerging economic interest group that expressed an Arab nationalist identity. Within the next two years these dockworkers were to affiliate with explicitly nationalist Arab labour unions.¹⁰⁸

Another development evinced disquietude among Palestinian workers around Jaffa. The day before the demonstration, *Filastin* reported that a mandatory court convicted a Jew of assaulting an Arab worker with a large screwdriver during an earlier attempt by Jewish workers to break a strike of Arab workers in a tannery in nearby Yazur.¹⁰⁹ During the same month a government report noted that, despite what was then regarded as a promising employment outlook in Jaffa, the tanneries were experiencing a downturn in business.¹¹⁰

On the day of the demonstration, the protesters assembled for Friday prayer. Afterwards they left the area of the Great Mosque and proceeded through the streets towards the government building. British accounts of the demonstration estimated the number of participants to be upwards of 7000 and perhaps over 8000, many of whom were armed with sticks and iron bars. The crowd included a delegation of Arab women from Jerusalem. The demonstrators fought when confronted by police, and the police fired into the crowd and into a coffee house, killing 22 demonstrators and bystanders and wounding a larger number. A protester dropped two stones from an archway on an Arab policeman, killing him, and a number of police were wounded in the fighting.¹¹¹ Arab boy scouts gave first aid and transported the dead and wounded to hospitals and clinics. By 2.30 that afternoon the city was calm and under curfew.¹¹²

Later that evening police arrested Congress of Youth leaders and several members of the Arab Executive. The Arab press claimed that police beat the youth leaders in custody, though it must be said that such was not the traditional British style of dealing with wayward

client politicians.¹¹³ A government official writing a few months later noted of Ya'qub al-Ghusayn that he '[w]as one of promoters [sic] of Jaffa demonstration October 1933 and was arrested after it, but he was noticeably absent during the demonstration itself'.¹¹⁴

When news of the shootings reached Nablus, a group gathered near the post office and Barclays Bank and threw stones at the buildings and police, who then fired on the crowd, wounding several. In Haifa, on that and the following day, crowds estimated at between 600 and 2000, swarmed around the central police station, stoning officers and erecting barricades in the streets. Police dispersed them with clubs and gunfire, killing four protesters. Arab areas of Haifa began a strike on the second day,¹¹⁵ which was when two reported cases of assaults on Jews were perpetrated. A crowd attacked a truck from a Zionist settlement, forced out its passengers, stoned them and then burnt the vehicle. Arabs intervened and escorted the Jews to a safe place. At about the same time, a group of Arabs threw rocks at a Jewish-owned taxi, smashing its windows and injuring its occupants.¹¹⁶ The Arab community held a nation-wide strike intermittently for the next week, during which there were sporadic shooting incidents and short-lived demonstrations, but no casualties.¹¹⁷ Little damage was done to private property in Haifa beyond the taxi and truck, and it seems that the police inflicted most of the damage to property in Jaffa. In total, 26 Palestinian Arabs other than the policeman were killed and 187 were injured. All the deaths occurred on the first two days of the demonstrations and protests.¹¹⁸

A notice of burials for ten of the people who were killed gives us some idea of the background of the participants in the Jaffa demonstrations. They included one camel driver, three car or truck drivers, three identified only as workers, and one fisherman. Two others were not identified by their occupations. Four were from Jaffa, two from the village of Yazur in the Jaffa subdistrict, one from a village near Hebron, one from Majdal, one from Jabaliyah in Gaza, and another the press identified as a Bedouin (*'arab*) from the village and tribe of Bani Suhaylah in Gaza. All ten were males aged between 20 and 35.¹¹⁹ Although it is hardly a scientific sampling, the list strongly suggests that young workers, significant numbers of whom did not originate from the city, were prominent at the demonstration.¹²⁰

The crowd that fought with police in Haifa and the one that demonstrated in Jaffa seem to have been similarly composed. A list of

ten of those hospitalized in Haifa included seven workers, among them a carpenter's helper, a bakery worker, a porter, two cigarette factory workers and a shoeshiner. In addition, the list included a driver who also worked in the Acre customs office, and a student whose father worked 'with the cars'. One of the wounded was from the village of Arura in Haifa subdistrict; one had lived in Haifa for six years and another for 20 years. Others came from Gaza, Nablus, the village of Shuwaykah in the Tulkarm subdistrict, Burqin in the Jenin subdistrict, Jarash in the Ramlah area and Silwad near Ramallah. One of the wounded was 60, three were in their thirties, one was 14 and one 11.¹²¹ This list suggests that Palestinian Arab workers from disparate parts of the country, including rural areas, cooperated in nationwide protests.

Interpreting the Demonstrations

A most striking aspect of the October demonstrations was their discipline and degree of organization, exemplified by the fact that they were directed virtually entirely at the British, rather than at the Jews, with the intent of effecting a change in the government's policy. In this regard, British intelligence recorded, 'No attack was made on Jews, with the sole exception of Haifa where 10 were injured in street disorders, and of these 3 only were hospital cases.' The report added, 'Definite orders were given by the leaders that Jews were not to be attacked. There were rumours at one time that Jews probably Revisionists, would organise a procession and such if it materialized was to be allowed to proceed unmolested by Arabs.'¹²²

The Istiqlalists were also eager to emphasize how much the events of October were a departure from what had gone before. *Al-Arab* pointed out that it was the first uprising directed solely at British policy, adding that all clashes in the demonstrations were between the British and Arabs, whereas previous violence had been between Jews and Arabs with the British watching from the sidelines.¹²³ In an interview with a Jewish Agency representative after the demonstrations, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi demanded, 'This time can you accuse us of directing our movement against the Jews? Did one hair of the Jews fall to the ground? ... This time our movement was directed against the mandatory government and not against the Jews.'¹²⁴

Perhaps more significantly, it was not just the Istiqlalists and their nationalist associates who saw the demonstrations as a turning point

in the development of the Palestinian national movement. Even David Ben-Gurion, previously dismissive of Palestinian Arab nationalism, recognized that the demonstrators directed their protest solely against the government. Writing to Zionist leaders in London he asserted that the Arab community had shown itself through the protests to be 'an organised and disciplined public, who present their national will through political maturity and capability of self-evaluation'.¹²⁵

High Commissioner Wauchope, while refusing to admit either the participation of the fellahin or the Palestinian leadership's organizational capacity, did note the absence of 'the religious cry' in the demonstrations and described them instead as 'purely political'. He attributed this 'mainly to the agreement Government made last year with the Supreme Muslim Council and to my own (at present) most happy relations with the Mufti and other members of the Supreme Muslim Council'.¹²⁶ Wauchope's observation approached recognition of a nationalist character in the demonstrations. However, he believed that it was the sectarian system, which the government underwrote, that forestalled an ever-threatening Islamic backlash against the British. With Hajj Amin's return to Palestine after the demonstrations, the utility of this system to the government was again confirmed to the high commissioner – at least in the short run.

The Return of Hajj Amin al-Husayni

The permanent office of the Islamic Congress released a statement on 10 November that Hajj Amin al-Husayni was on his way to Palestine from his fund-raising mission in India.¹²⁷ Meanwhile, the government released the organizers of the demonstrations from prison and, within a few days, several members of the Arab Executive had decided to convene a full meeting on 17 November.¹²⁸ As the time of the meeting approached, the Istiqlalists and Majlisi leadership held talks on how to continue the programme of strikes and demonstrations. The Istiqlalists favoured action against the government only, but Jamal al-Husayni stated that his faction intended to direct the demonstrations against the Zionists and would not cooperate with the Istiqlalists. Many Arab Executive members reportedly opposed further strikes.¹²⁹

The Arab Executive held its meeting on the same day as Hajj Amin arrived in Palestine. With 33 members attending, including new members Ahmad al-Shuqayri and Emil al-Ghawri, the Arab Executive decided to resume demonstrations on 17 January, the 'Id al-Fitr holi-

day.¹³⁰ By postponing the demonstrations for two months the executive revealed its lack of resolve to continue a disruptive campaign of protest, especially at the peak of the citrus season. The Congress of Youth's executive met later and endorsed the plan.¹³¹ One dampening effect on the organization of the next demonstration was that the government tried and sentenced the leaders of the previous protests in early December and the appeals process stretched out over an eight-month period. The last stage came in July 1934 when all those convicted, apart from the Majlisi leader Shaykh Muzaffar, signed a collective three-year pledge of good behaviour with a bond of £P 100. Shaykh Muzaffar chose to serve a six-month prison term.¹³² Muzaffar, it should be recalled, was an owner of extensive orange groves, which indicated that economic motives did not determine an individual's attitude towards the demonstrations.¹³³

The most important restraining factor was Hajj Amin's failure to raise substantial sums of money while on his trip to India.¹³⁴ The Islamic Congress, through which he had hoped to mobilize his supporters in Palestine and to make the question of Palestine a pan-Islamic issue, was financially as weak as ever. Hence, his dependence on British goodwill remained strong. The mufti was not, however, unwilling to challenge quietly the Palestine government's immigration policy. In a private meeting with Wauchope in the month after Hajj Amin's return, he assured the high commissioner that he wanted to help him win back the confidence of the people. While emphasizing that he did not accept the mandate, Hajj Amin argued that there were remedies the government 'could and should find within the mandate'. He asked it to define at what point the Jewish national home would be regarded as complete, noting that Arabs believed it had in fact been achieved. He further suggested that a royal commission of inquiry be appointed, an economic survey of the country undertaken, and immigration stopped until the survey was completed.¹³⁵ But the mufti did not pursue his recommendations and it became clear that his first concern was to secure the finances of the principal institution through which he garnered support in Palestine.

As we saw in Chapter 4, the financial arrangement the mufti and high commissioner arrived at in 1932 left hanging the issue of whether the government would recognize some of the properties the SMC claimed as *awqaf*. Near the time of the scheduled third demonstration, Hajj Amin and Wauchope resumed these

negotiations. While Hajj Amin was acutely aware of his dependence on the government, in the period following the demonstrations Wauchope was just as cognizant of the need to maintain good relations with the Muslim community. His concern about the political situation influenced the Treasury in London to allow the government to forfeit past and future tax revenues from the properties in question.¹³⁶ In April 1934 Wauchope and Hajj Amin concluded a second financial agreement, which, unlike that of 1932, was written and formal. The government agreed to pay the SMC £P 7000 a year from taxes collected from the properties as *waqf* revenues, including a lump-sum of £P 43,690 for arrears since the end of 1931. It is significant that Wauchope secured from Hajj Amin a guarantee that the funds would be spent only on repairing the Dome of the Rock, al-Aqsa Mosque and the Mosque of Hebron, and buying land in the Tulkarm subdistrict for the settlement of landless cultivators.¹³⁷ With Wauchope assured that the money could not be used for political purposes, the government could cast itself in the role of partner to the religious tradition of its colonial subjects and defender of the peasantry. Hajj Amin, for his part, had the good fortune to see the government financially underwrite the primary institution through which he built his constituency in Palestine.

These negotiations, leading to such a beneficial arrangement for the mufti, lay before him when he returned to Palestine and in the weeks leading to the demonstration of 17 January 1934. As negotiations over the *waqf* properties began, Hajj Amin demonstrated his willingness to ease the high commissioner's concern about the demonstration, which the Arab Executive had resolved to hold and which the government had forbidden. In a private meeting between Hajj Amin and Wauchope, the former agreed to two principles: first there would be no processions without government permission and second no processions would be held near government offices. Jamal al-Husayni, among others, was insistent that the planned demonstrations be held contrary to the government prohibition. In this matter, as Wauchope later learned, Hajj Amin proved his worth to the government, first by persuading his relative and aide not to defy government strictures and next by orchestrating processions that were so mild that they were scarcely recognizable as demonstrations. Wauchope wrote to Cunliffe-Lister that the mufti 'had a long talk' with Jamal Effendi and persuaded him not to defy government

orders. Afterwards, Jamal al-Husayni, 'in the role of mediator', met the Arab Executive and 'subject to some criticism from some of the Young Arab Leaders, finally persuaded the Arab Executive to agree to proposals which were consistent with public safety and so likely to receive Government support'.¹³⁸

Ten days before the scheduled demonstrations, Hajj Amin held a secret meeting in his home, to which he invited Majlisi leaders, Congress of Youth leaders and Istiqlalists. There Hajj Amin explained that the recent demonstrations represented a setback for the nation because they hurt relations with 'all [the nation's] friends in England'. He admonished his listeners not to repeat this error but, rather, to concentrate their forces against the Jews alone.¹³⁹

The government decided to permit the Arab Executive to hold the demonstration scheduled for Nablus on the Islamic holiday of 'Id al-Fitr; however, the organizers were required to agree to tight restrictions that were laid out in meetings with district commissioners.¹⁴⁰ Jamal al-Husayni, though unwilling to challenge the mufti, was nonetheless angered by the terms of the agreement with the government. In a meeting with Hajj Amin and others, Jamal Effendi complained about the restrictions on the processions, which he felt threatened to turn them into a funeral. Hajj Amin offered to meet government representatives to gain their approval of speeches.¹⁴¹ That he was prepared to ask permission even for speeches illustrated Hajj Amin's willingness to reassure the British; his ability to persuade Wauchope to allow processions at all demonstrated the level of trust the mufti enjoyed both from the Palestinian leadership and from the high commissioner. Such reconciliation of the concerns of the government with those of its Palestinian critics constituted a display of the politics of notables at a highly refined level.

The moderating effect of Hajj Amin's presence on the scene in Palestine was profound, as the terms to which the Arab Executive agreed for the procession on the holiday of 'Id al-Fitr indicated. The Arab Executive was to hold the 'demonstration' between the ludicrous hours of 7.00 and 8.00 a.m. along a predetermined route. As would be expected, no one was to carry any sort of weapon. But more tellingly, speeches were banned as were playing music and displaying flags, with the exception of traditional religious banners. All people were required to return to their homes immediately after the Arab Executive's statement was read.¹⁴² As the Jerusalem district commis-

sioner pointed out, Muslims normally gathered in mosques in the early morning of 'Id al-Fitr and later went in large numbers to the cemetery to visit family tombs.¹⁴³ Clearly, what was originally intended to be a political and national protest was submerged into a staid and annually recurring religious observance. Thus, in a back-handed manner, British government officials accepted the Istiqlalists' argument that Palestinian opposition to Zionist colonization and foreign domination expressed a nationalist collective will and identity. For all Wauchoppe's fear of raising 'the religious cry' and his pride that the October 1933 demonstrations had been 'purely political', the high commissioner and his officials found themselves endeavouring to render a political demonstration purely religious.

The Arab Executive's 'demonstration' in Nablus on 'Id al-Fitr passed as quietly as planned.¹⁴⁴ Wauchoppe could therefore report to the Colonial Office the continued value of the notable politicians to the government, pointing out that 'not only the Mufti, but other leaders still exert a powerful influence over the crowd of the towns. The Mufti exercised his great authority over the fellaheen to stop them heeding the extremists.'¹⁴⁵ British intelligence in Palestine likewise commented on Hajj Amin's calming influence and on the resentment of the Istiqlalists, who believed that the 'manifestations were controlled by the Mufti from behind the scenes'.¹⁴⁶ By late spring, a Zionist intelligence assessment could claim that the Palestinian national movement was 'in a state of prolonged quiescence, so much that it is difficult to believe that there is any national movement in the country'.¹⁴⁷

Despite damaging press articles and rumours, the Istiqlal Party survived through the autumn of 1933 because it could contribute to the outraged protest against immigration. But when Hajj Amin returned from India and stifled the protests, the party's animating spirit expired. The Opposition politician and lawyer Hasan Sidqi al-Dajani told a contact at the Jewish Agency shortly after the Jaffa demonstration, 'Everyone knows that [ʿAwni ʿAbd al-Hadi] acted as broker in the sale of Wadi al-Hawarith. It's true that the Istiqlalists now have a recognized power, but their power and influence should not be exaggerated.'¹⁴⁸ By spring 1934, Sami al-Sarraj and Ibrahim al-Shanti had left the editorial staff of *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* and established *al-Difa'* as a pan-Arab nationalist daily and one that soon displayed a fascination with Hitler's Germany and a conflicted atti-

tude towards its policies. The paper reported in May that the Istiqlal Party would soon be re-established. However, rather than an accurate prediction of the future, this was an admission that the party had ceased to exist.¹⁴⁹

As the initiative in the national movement passed to youth organizers and journalists, public opinion became as important as the secret councils of the Arab Executive's notables. The executive was weakened further in March 1934 when the death of Musa Kazim al-Husayni deprived it of its chief arbitrator between the two major factions. Intending to revive the institution, members met in June to set a date for an eighth national congress. Although the meeting was closed to the press, it was reported to have been a stormy gathering, and no firm date was set for the congress.¹⁵⁰ The executive released a communiqué stating that, in preparation for the congress, Palestine must follow the path of 'civilized countries' in establishing political parties with clear programmes.¹⁵¹ The Istiqlalists had advocated this three years earlier.

Nationalist Political Parties

The intrusion of peasants and wage labourers into the domain of the political classes during the autumn of 1933 introduced more doubts about the sufficiency of sectarianism as an instrument in the practice of the politics of notables. These doubts surfaced in the minds of British officials no less forcefully than they breached the consciousness of the Palestinian Arab political elite. The doubts were reinforced by another factor, one that was exogenous to the system of colonial control that the British officials and the Palestinian elite had together constructed. This was the failure of Hajj Amin al-Husayni and his associates to raise significant sums of money in India for the office of the Islamic Congress. From 1933 the office showed diminishing evidence of activity, and its local branches in Palestinian cities ceased to function. The Opposition's Islamic organization, the Party of the Islamic Nation, also passed into non-existence in 1933 having never displayed any real activity.¹⁵² Both factions abandoned these sectarian organizations and turned their attentions to the establishment of explicitly nationalist parties in 1934 and 1935. Their new strategy was as much a response to a shift in British policy as it was to the success of popular mobilization by the nationalist activists.

Even by the end of 1932, as the Istiqlal Party began to promote its

programme of non-cooperation, Wauchope had anticipated that these developments required the government to engage the Palestinian public and political elite in a new style. As he explained to Chaim Arlosoroff during a private dinner, Wauchope intended gradually to increase Palestinian Arab participation in government, beginning with the appointment of leaders to government boards, then holding municipal elections and, following those, elections for a legislative council, as required by the White Paper of 1930.¹⁵³ The membership of the legislative council, as Wauchope finally proposed it in 1934, was to be in part chosen by the government and in part elected. He envisioned for the council a narrowly circumscribed purview and limited powers. The programme of elections and the council thus resembled the Morley-Minto reforms in India and was another example of what Lord Cromer had dismissed as 'mock parliaments'.¹⁵⁴ Wauchope clearly intended the scheme to buttress rather than supplant the system of indirect rule.

In the summer of 1934, only months after the 'demonstrations' on 'Id al-Fitr, the high commissioner saw through the first step of his scheme to gain more cooperation from the Palestinian political leadership. Wauchope instituted the municipal elections, which resulted in victories for the allies of Raghib al-Nashashibi in Gaza and Jaffa, thus somewhat counterbalancing the power enjoyed by the Majlisi faction through its control of the SMC. In Jerusalem, a physician and former official of the health department, Dr Husayn Fakhri al-Khalidi, defeated Raghib al-Nashashibi for the post of mayor. Al-Khalidi had formerly not involved himself in the rivalry between the Nashashibi and the Husayni families, but in the election he ran with the support of the latter.¹⁵⁵

Following the municipal elections, Wauchope undertook plans for his next step, which was to hold elections to the legislative council. On delivering his plans to the Colonial Office at the end of 1934, they quickly became known to Palestinian factional leaders who prepared for the first countrywide elections by establishing nationalist political parties. Arab leaders intended this tactic of creating parties, as British police reports noted, to assure their election to the council and to gain public consent to their further cooperation with the government.¹⁵⁶ This establishment of nationalist parties carried echoes of the creation of the Congress of Arab Youth in 1932, when the leadership adopted the idiom and symbolism of the nationalist activists while at

the same time striving to prove to the government their capacity to contain the campaign for collective dissent. In short, with the coming of popular politics as expressed in the protests in the autumn of 1933 and in the new electoral politics, the Palestinian Arab political elite turned to nationalism as the primary basis for political association and for organizing their constituencies, while the two major factions effectively abandoned their former sectarian-based organizations.

The first of the new nationalist parties to appear was the National Defence Party (*Hizb al-difaʿ al-watani*) led by Raghib al-Nashashibi. Established in December 1934, it began to show signs of activity in the first two months of 1935.¹⁵⁷ The party's statement of its goals made no mention of Arab unity, but claimed it would strive for the complete independence of Palestine and for the country's social, educational and economic development. From its beginning, the party was supportive of the legislative council.¹⁵⁸ *Filastin*, which was soon recognized as the organ of the new party, claimed that the founders and leaders were the wealthiest men in Palestine.¹⁵⁹ ʿIsa al-ʿIsa, the newspaper's owner, was a party leader, as were a number of Arab mayors including ʿAsim Saʿid, the mayor of Jaffa.¹⁶⁰ By September the notables of a number of towns and cities had held celebrations in honour of al-Nashashibi and his party, though it is far from clear that these resulted in the establishment of functioning branches or the registration of significant numbers of members.¹⁶¹ Village *mukhtars*, among them ten members of the Barghuthi family and three of the al-Tamimi family, also showed early support for the party. In a press release, they saluted al-Nashashibi's support for the proposed legislative council, emphasizing that he was neither 'a government man' (*hukumi*) nor a pro-Zionist.¹⁶²

In March 1935 the Majlisi faction created its own nationalist party called the Palestine Arab Party (*Hizb al-ʿArabi al-Filastini*).¹⁶³ Its charter and by-laws expressed a strong pan-Arab orientation that strikingly resembled that of the Istiqlal Party.¹⁶⁴ Jamal al-Husayni became the party's president and Emil al-Ghawri its secretary. The leadership established the newspaper *al-Liwaʿ* in August as the party's mouthpiece. As for the National Defence Party, the summer of 1935 was a period of organizational activity for the Palestine Arab Party.¹⁶⁵ In July and August organizers claimed new branches in Jaffa, Gaza, Khan Yunis, Majdal, Beersheba, Bethlehem, Acre, Nazareth, Safuriyah and Nablus, though the leaders' efforts met with no success in Haifa,

Jenin and Tulkarm.¹⁶⁶ A gathering of the party in Nazareth in September attracted nearly 300 participants and, mirroring the rallies of the Istiqlal Party, closed with an oath, which the crowd endorsed, to strive for Arab independence and an Arab Palestine.¹⁶⁷ In the same period the party announced its intention to form youth groups, but by the next spring these had still not materialized.¹⁶⁸

The third of what came to be called 'the five parties' or 'the parties' was the Congress of Arab Youth, still led by Ya'qub al-Ghusayn. Its executive committee convened in May 1935 and deemed the gathering a congress. British intelligence noted that the officers neither made inflammatory speeches nor called for demonstrations, and that the Majlisi faction supported the organization's orientation.¹⁶⁹ In December the Congress of Youth began to publish its newspaper, *al-Kafah*.¹⁷⁰

Politicians formed two other parties in the summer of 1935, neither of which attained any significant popular following or institutional existence. The first of these, the Reform Party (*Hizb al-Islah*), was announced in June and its expressed goals were the independence of Palestine within Arab unity.¹⁷¹ Officially, the party had no single dominant leader, although Dr Husayn al-Khalidi, one of the party's three secretaries, was widely regarded as such. The Reform Party's officers included several mayors and former mayors as well as a number of intellectuals without any prior experience in politics. Unlike the three major parties, the Reform Party had no newspaper, and it displayed little capacity to attract a following. The second of these two minor parties was the National Bloc Party (*Hizb al-Kutlah al-Wataniyah*) under the leadership of 'Abd al-Latif Salah, a Nablus lawyer and prewar nationalist. Organized in October 1935, the party stood for the independence of Palestine and does not seem to have been especially attracted to pan-Arab nationalism. Based in Nablus, it found no more of a constituency than did the Reform Party and it represented a similarly narrow faction within the Palestinian elite.¹⁷²

The spate of public meetings the two main parties conducted in July and August of 1935 represented the closest to what could be termed popular mobilization by any of the parties. As we shall see in the next chapter, the leaders of 'the five parties' soon began to hold secret meetings with a view to establishing a unified front; for all appearances, the leadership of the parties functioned as something akin to a reconstituted Arab Executive.

Independent Nationalist Associations

The task of organizing the Palestinian Arab public for its most sustained and forceful episode of contentious politics was primarily taken up by what British intelligence termed 'independent young men groups'. British intelligence also acknowledged in the summer of 1935 the formation of clandestine associations such as the Revolutionary Youth (*al-Shabab al-Tha'ir*) in Tulkarm and Qalqilya, the Party of Youth (*Hizb al-Fatat*, apparently taking its name from the prewar Young Arab Society), and the Force (*al-Quwwah*).¹⁷³ Further indication of the creation of nationalist anti-mandate associations outside the framework of the elite parties appeared in press reports of branches of the Syrian National Party (*Hizb al-Suri al-Qawmi*) being organized in Jaffa and Tulkarm.¹⁷⁴ This party, which the Lebanese Greek Orthodox journalist Antun Sa'dah formed in 1932, advocated secular nationalism in a Syrian entity that encompassed Lebanon and Palestine.

In the same period in which new nationalist political parties emerged, Arab labour organizations developed as distinctively nationalist associations. During the municipal elections of 1934, Fakhri al-Nashashibi, the cousin and close associate of Raghib al-Nashashibi, established the Arab Workers Society (AWS) in Jerusalem, with a branch in Bayt Dajan near Jaffa. By October, a branch of the AWS had also appeared in Jaffa and was challenging Zionist efforts to unionize Arab workers in the city.¹⁷⁵ It seems that after the demonstrations of 1933, Fakhri al-Nashashibi and other leaders saw in the workers both a following for his faction and a source of anti-mandate protest that needed to be controlled. A British official's profile of al-Nashashibi portrayed him as '[a] man of no principles or scruples, trusted by no one', but added more approvingly, 'Has been useful to Police.'¹⁷⁶

Despite its origins as an extension of an elite faction, the AWS soon showed itself willing to challenge the notables. Speakers at a meeting of the Jaffa branch attacked what they considered a phoney Arab political leadership and spoke especially favourably of Sheikh Muzaffar, who had just been released from prison.¹⁷⁷ In the summer of 1935, the Jaffa society expelled its president, Michel Mitri, an engineer trained in Latin America and the son of a member of Jaffa's municipal council.¹⁷⁸ By August Mitri and his supporters had formed a Jaffa AWS, which was separate from the one al-Nashashibi had organized.¹⁷⁹ As we shall see in the next chapter, Mitri and his AWS

soon began to work closely with former Istiqlalists to organize a nationwide strike in protest against British policies. Mitri thus represented a new linkage between the nationalist activists and the Arab workers.

Conclusions

The system of colonial control the British authorities and Palestinian Arab elites had together assembled over 15 years of interaction suffered a crisis in the summer of 1933. In response, elite politicians, nationalist activists and at least some Palestinian workers began an interpretive process that, over the next 18 months, led them to establish innovative associations for representing their interests to the government and to the Palestinian Arab public. The interpretation of the changed circumstances and the creation of new institutions were also expressed through the amplification of Arab nationalism as a basis of political association.

The surge in Jewish immigration was the immediate source of the crisis in the summer of 1933, but the Palestinian Arabs' response to it needs to be understood in the context of collapsing prices for their agriculture produce, a shortage of credit, a confiscatory level of taxation and the longer-term pressure of population against agricultural land. Rural Palestinian Arabs increasingly sought employment in the urban wage labour markets, especially in the port cities where they witnessed the concentration of Jewish immigrants and competed with them for jobs. These contingent developments sharpened the contradictions that were institutionalized in the mandate and its obligations to the Jewish national home.

The leaderships of both the Yishuv and Arab community found their positions challenged in the new circumstances. The Labour Zionist movement, politically ascendant but confronted by an immigrant middle class with substantial resources, strove to impose the discipline of Hebrew labour on the new Jewish enterprises. This, in part, took the form of pickets and forced expulsions of Arab labour. Those tactics were signally unsuccessful in reserving Jewish capital for Jewish labour, but they did confirm for Palestinian Arabs their beliefs that the intentions of the Zionist movement were fundamentally aggressive and exclusivist.

The Palestinian Arab political elite, as much as the leadership of the Yishuv, also faced a rapidly shifting set of conditions. Most obviously,

the leadership's reluctance to confront the government became increasingly difficult in the face of accelerating Jewish immigration and highly publicized land transfers. Another aspect of these changes was that members of this elite like Ya'qub al-Ghusayn, Sheikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Muzaffar and Alfred Rok, who invested in citriculture, profited from the expanding market for their product while the fellahin in large numbers were trying to escape pauperization by seeking work in the urban areas. The politicians had to resolve their relations with workers who witnessed the growth of Tel Aviv and Jewish areas of Haifa and who faced the Labour Zionists' pickets. This became especially conspicuous during the Jaffa demonstrations when Arab workers displayed their receptiveness to organization for political protest.

The nationalist youth, who over the preceding two years had with increasing frequency interposed in relations among the leading politicians, the government and the Palestinian Arab public, primarily initiated and organized the demonstrations. As working or aspiring professionals, administrators, journalists and teachers, they found their professional and social opportunities in the emerging public sphere, and their political activities pushed along its emergence. The Congress of Youth and the Istiqlal Party to some extent represented these younger nationalists, but they also acted independently of any formal association. It also seems that this element of the Palestinian public was the most responsive to the Istiqlal Party's Arab nationalism and demands for independence. Although the party's campaign for non-cooperation in the spring of 1933 had threatened the interests of many educated young Arabs, the Wadi al-Hawarith evictions and the steep increase in Jewish immigration had changed their aggregate calculus of national and professional interests by the following autumn. A significant element of these youth therefore made the transition to national activism, as was evident in their organizational role in the demonstrations.

Some scholars have claimed that only Islamic identity could have possessed mobilizing power for the mass of Palestinians. According to one historian, the Palestinians' 'struggle against Jewish colonization was perceived in religious terms and this was their only recognizable *Weltanschauung*'.¹⁸⁰ Religious leaders did in fact participate in the Jaffa demonstrations, certainly the majority of demonstrators were Muslims and, as in the Jerusalem demonstration, the marchers assem-

bled first in the area around a mosque on a day of prayer. The organization for the Jaffa demonstration did not, though, take place in the mosque that day; it was done in the days before. The Congress of Youth's most important partners in directing the demonstration, in addition to the Arab scouting units and Istiqlalists, were the crew captains, who apparently wielded authority with workers in the port area. They represented not a religious association, but an economic interest group.

The leadership and organizers of the demonstrations articulated their goals in nationalist terms and High Commissioner Wauchope in particular noted the absence of 'the religious cry'. It is doubtful that many Palestinian labourers who participated in the demonstrations associated the concept of the nation with the French Revolution or with well-elaborated ideas of popular sovereignty, as did 'Izzat Darwazah and younger educated Palestinians. Nevertheless, the idea of an Arab cultural and linguistic community, crossing confessional lines and carrying political significance certainly was not alien to rural Palestinians. As we saw in Chapter 1, the rural population of Greater Syria for centuries had formed political factions that took their names from the pre-Islamic Arabian tribal confederations, the Qays and Yaman. The adherents included townsmen, fellahin and Bedouin, as well as Muslims, orthodox Christians and Catholics. The expression of political affiliation in the symbolism of Qays and Yaman factions did not constitute modern nationalism; however, it is difficult to imagine that workers on the Jaffa and Haifa waterfronts and on construction sites in Tel Aviv, working with other Palestinians as well as with Egyptians, Syrians and Transjordanians, did not conceive of an Arab community contesting Zionism and British government in Palestine. The concept of the nation is not inherently more recondite than that of the universal community of believers in Islam, and sectarian identity was only one of several available bases for political association in the 1930s.

The continued power of sectarian political organization was most evident in the events following Hajj Amin's return to the country, when his mediation with rural and urban leaders prevented further demonstrations of any import. His willingness to act in the government's interests was a function of the SMC's continued financial dependence on it and of the ongoing negotiations between the mufti and the high commissioner over additional transfers of revenues from

the government to the council. This was not an institutional relationship whereby the government could have substituted any of a number of people for Hajj Amin as president of the SMC and achieved the same results. The mode of politics in which Hajj Amin excelled was distinctly personal and depended on his subtle force of personality, political instincts and knowledge of how things worked in Palestine. These strengths were doubtlessly reinforced by the ability of his supporters to tell their own constituencies that their directives bore the imprimatur of the chief mufti of Jerusalem.

The persistence of the secretive and personal politics of notables notwithstanding, an expanding stratum of political entrepreneurs who thought in nationalist terms and who were willing to engage in popular mobilization steadily eroded these relations. High Commissioner Wauchope was certainly aware of this as he attempted a controlled broadening of the participation of the population in the governing processes through elections to municipal councils and by proposing a legislative council. Even more significantly, the Palestinian Arab political elite recognized that it also had to adapt its strategies to the new conditions. This was evident in the quiet disappearance of the local branches of the office of the Islamic Congress and of the Opposition's Party of the Islamic Nation. The change was even clearer in the establishment of five explicitly Arab nationalist political parties and a new nationalist Arab labour union. In the wake of the Palestinian Arab community's first major episode of popular mobilization and with the prospect of new electoral politics, it was not religious symbolism that the most practised political leaders took up to organize their constituencies. It was the symbolism of Arab nationalism.

Chapter 8

Through the Lens of 1936

Prior to its collapse, the Istiqlal Party represented the most coherent Palestinian political faction endeavouring to develop a repertoire of popular political action. But the ideas of Arab independence and unity, so compelling to the party's members, were never sufficient in themselves to bring people into the streets. Occasions of organized popular protest occurred when events sporadically transformed the persistent and pervasive sense of threat among Palestinian Arabs into one that was acute. These periods of crisis included the conflict over the Western Wall, the MacDonald letter, the issue of the sealed armories in Jewish settlements, and the sharp increase in Jewish immigration in 1933. However, the widespread perception of peril alone could not bring about popular protest. An episode of popular mobilization required political activists coordinating the participants across time and space, communicating to them the methods of protest, and articulating the demands that the participants endorsed. The activists in a sense provided a script the participants could publicly perform, though with considerable freedom for improvisation.¹ Political activism of this nature depended on, and took place within, a functioning public sphere constituted by the Arabic press, a telecommunications infrastructure, associations, schools and public spaces that facilitated political discussion. No less importantly, political activism and the public sphere reflexively reinforced one another.

The crises during which popular mobilization took place resulted most directly from the Zionist movement's advances in consolidating its position in Palestine. Therefore, it is especially significant that the Istiqlalists and the nationalists associated with them turned the Palestinian public away from the Zionist movement as the primary object of its confrontation, as it clearly had been in 1929, and redirected its protests at the British government. The Istiqlalists thus represented an element of politically aware Palestinian Arabs that consciously

strove to create a public that made claims on the government in the name of the nation. The redirection of contention and the organization of popular interventions into the political realm fundamentally changed the notable politicians' relationship with the government and with their constituencies. In 1930 it had been fairly easy for a politician to trumpet his strong opposition to Zionism at the same time as placing his son in the bureaucracy and soliciting the favours of the high commissioner. Within three years, however, the Istiqlalists and nationalists who shared their outlook had succeeded in binding the question of British control of the country to the more narrowly defined challenge of Zionism. In response, both the British administration and the notable politicians had changed their strategies by 1935, and both sought to rescue the politics of notables by permitting a regulated and restricted participation of the Palestinian Arab public in the governing process. The power of the idea of nationalism at the time was expressed in the recourse of the notable factions to forming explicitly Arab nationalist political parties.

The symbolic accommodation of populist nationalism that came from the politicians did not long preserve their positions or the system of colonial control they had negotiated over time with the British authorities. Several more occurrences of popular political intervention soon forced them into confronting the government and ultimately required them to choose sides in an armed rebellion. It is in these events that the importance of the Istiqlal Party becomes clearer. Activists in 1935 and 1936 replicated and strengthened the patterns and methods of protest that the party had initiated and they further advanced the nationalist public sphere that the party had striven to augment. These processes culminated in the spring of 1936 in a long general strike, which also drew strength from an armed uprising that began shortly after it. Thus, the strike, which historians have frequently characterized as 'spontaneous', was anything but that.²

Threats and Opportunities

As in the previous rallies and demonstrations, the 1935 and 1936 protests took place in an atmosphere of heightened threat. Yet, for nationalist activists in Palestine there was also a sense of opportunity. This sense was the progeny of mass demonstrations and general strikes that nationalists conducted in Egyptian and Syrian cities and that won concessions from Great Britain and France. In November

1935 Egyptians expressed outrage at what they perceived to be British resistance to the restoration of the 1923 constitution, which the government had suspended a year earlier. Students led huge protests in the streets of Cairo and provincial towns. Although the army suppressed these, King Fu'ad still felt compelled to restore the constitution the next month and to name a new cabinet to institute elections and begin negotiations with Britain on Egypt's independence.³

On 20 January 1936, demonstrations also erupted in the Syrian cities of Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Hama. As in Egypt, students were in the front ranks of these demonstrations and the League of National Action, which young pan-Arab nationalists established at the Qarna'il congress in 1933, was the primary organizer. With the demonstrations a strike began in Damascus, spread to other towns and shut down the country for 43 days. The French administration's proclamation of martial law, the arrests of hundreds and the killing of a number of demonstrators in several cities did not end the campaign of protests. Organizers called off the strike only after the French administration dismissed the collaborating government of Taj al-Din al-Hasani, promised to negotiate a Syrian-French treaty, released political prisoners and allowed suspended newspapers to return to publication.⁴ Nationalists in Palestine, especially the former Istiqlalists, saw in the events in Syria and Egypt a model to be emulated in Palestine as well as the application of a strategy that they had attempted in 1933.

While the protests and strikes in Egypt and Syria imparted a sense of possibility to activists in Palestine, a heightened sense of threat also infused the Palestinian public as the Zionist movement advanced in the country demographically, economically and even militarily. In 1935 the number of Jewish immigrants peaked, reaching a total of nearly 62,000 for the year. This reflected the increasing hostility in central Europe towards Jews, epitomized by the Nazi government in Germany. Having instituted an official boycott of Jewish businesses and purged Jews from the bureaucracy and professions in 1933, the German government passed the Nuremberg Laws in September 1935 forbidding marriages and sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews and establishing a two-tiered system of German citizenship. In the same month, the Nazi government began compiling a list of all Jews in Germany, thus laying the bureaucratic groundwork for the genocide that began six years later.⁵

Faced with its own threats and opportunities, the Zionist movement worked to consolidate its position in Palestine. The Histadrut's inflammatory campaign for Hebrew labour and demands by Jewish grove and farm owners for protection had led the government to promulgate a law in the spring of 1934 banning picketing against the employment of anyone of a specific race, religion or linguistic group.⁶ Despite this, Jews assaulted Arabs in Tel Aviv a number of times in the summer of 1935 because they worked in Jewish enterprises.⁷ The competition in the urban labour markets was, in the view of at least one Foreign Office official, only one aspect of hostile attitudes of Jews towards Palestinian Arabs. The official recorded in the spring of 1935: 'I fear the situation in Palestine is becoming increasingly dangerous. The present wave of prosperity has no doubt contributed to the postponement of a crisis, but all our evidence goes to show that a crisis is eventually inevitable.' He elaborated:

A friend of mine who is a shrewd and impartial observer, has just returned from a visit to Palestine, and was struck by the arrogant attitude the Jews are adopting. One small point which had impressed him was the ostentatious inconsiderateness of Jewish chauffeurs passing through Arab villages. My friend actually saw one Jewish chauffeur kill an Arab child and after pushing the body out of the way, drive on before anyone could stop him. He had heard several accounts of such incidents.⁸

A downturn in the Palestinian economy in the last months of 1935 soon added to this atmosphere. In Haifa – a magnet for workers of rural origin – building and investment lessened, and unemployment rose to the extent that Haurani workers were returning to Syria and Transjordan. A British report noted that five Jewish firms in the city had gone bankrupt in the last month of the year and that 20 to 30 Arab labourers each day sought employment via the 'Arab Workers' Society' (probably the Palestine Arab Workers Society). Workers' wages had declined during the year from 150–250 mils a day to 70–110. The report stated that 30 per cent of the labourers in Haifa were unemployed, and it transmitted an estimate by the 'Arab Workers' Society' that there were 3000 unemployed workers in the city.⁹ Earlier in the year, police had enforced another eviction order against rural Palestinian Arabs near Haifa on behalf of Jewish settlers. The evictees

threw rocks at the police, who responded with live fire, killing one of the former inhabitants.¹⁰

An even sharper sense of danger derived from the perception that the Zionist movement was on the way to attaining the military capability to establish its state. In 1935, underground workshops of the Haganah, the Zionist movement's main paramilitary force, manufactured more than 100 hand grenades a day. After the 1929 riots, and no doubt in response to intelligence indicating that Palestinian Arab armed groups were forming, the Haganah sent representatives to Belgium, France and Italy to purchase weapons, which were smuggled into Palestine through the ports in crates, luggage and sometimes barrels of cement.¹¹ A shipment of the last sort, discovered by port workers in Jaffa on 16 October 1935, caused Palestine's Arab community unprecedented alarm. Apparently originating in Belgium, the shipment included a large quantity of side arms and ammunition and, more ominously, 25 .30 machine guns (Lewis Guns).¹²

News of the weapons spread rapidly and shocked the Arab public even more than reports of the sealed armories in Jewish settlements in 1931. As in the earlier event, the news inspired young activists to protest and the demonstrations severely stressed relations between the Palestinian political elite and the mandatory government. By 1935, however, nationalist organizers had more experience, an existing network of contacts among themselves and a more confrontational press. No less importantly, the activists engaged a considerably more politicized population than they had only four years before.

The Activists Challenge the Notables – Again

The arms discovery took place at a time when the Arab parties had all but ceased their brief period of public meetings. They in fact seemed to be attempting to reconstruct the Arab Executive with its preference for consensus over conflict and its propensity to conduct politics secretly in its own and the government's offices.¹³ The previous month, the Congress of Youth had issued a call for unity – a suggestion the National Defence Party, the Reform Party and the National Bloc had enthusiastically supported.¹⁴ Only days before the discovery of the weapons, leaders of the National Defence Party and at least one member of the Congress of Youth had held a tea party for senior government officials, thus indicating how far the programme of non-cooperation agreed to in 1933 had receded from the leaders'

memories.¹⁵ The Congress of Youth called a meeting of 'all five parties' in its office in Jaffa. They then decided to draw up a memorandum of protest to present to the high commissioner on his return from London on 13 November, and they declared a one-day general strike for 26 October.¹⁶

Former members of the Istiqlal Party had displayed little activity to that point. From autumn 1933 until early July 1935, Akram Zu'aytir had been in Baghdad teaching in a government secondary school, co-writing a nationalist history text and working with scouting units. He returned to Palestine fully aware of the inactivity of the country's national movement and of the nationalist youths who had formerly driven it. Within two weeks of his return, he had met Istiqlal Party activists in a number of cities. Designating the Athletic Union Club, the party's former clubhouse in Nablus, to be the new headquarters for their movement, they initiated two minor nationalist observances, one in Nablus and another in Haifa.¹⁷ The Palestine Arab Party's and the National Defence Party's public meetings overshadowed both these events. However, the discovery of the smuggled weapons in the middle of October radically changed the atmosphere in the country and greatly expanded the opportunity for popular mobilization.

The Congress of Youth took the lead in organizing the strike the unified parties had called for on 26 October. This, however, appears to have been the response to a more broadly based demand. In a development that would intensify and have particular significance over the course of the next year, strike committees began to be formed in several Palestinian cities.¹⁸ One committee in Jaffa included the journalist and former Istiqlalist Hashim al-Sabi', who made no secret of his desire to transform the strike into a demonstration.¹⁹ On the designated day, the Arab community almost universally observed the strike and Arab traffic on Palestine's roads stopped totally.²⁰ A large delegation *Filastin* described as comprised of 'the populace' (*al-ahali*, which might also be translated as 'the common people') visited the Congress of Youth's office in Jaffa and asked for the strike to be maintained until the country had obtained its goals. Congress of Youth leaders were noncommittal; they promised only to give the matter consideration and to have an answer soon.²¹ The incident suggests strongly that the public and possibly working classes had begun to look to the educated youth to organize protests.

Zu'aytir's circle in Nablus had little to do with organizing the

strike, but within two days of the arms discovery his group had formed a committee to orchestrate a popular rally in the city on Balfour Day, then only about two weeks away. They intended this to be 'the beginning of a revolutionary campaign in Palestine'.²² It was, in a sense, a replay of the rallies and demonstrations in Nablus in 1931 when nationalist youth and veteran Istiqlalists made the city a centre of protest against the arming of Jewish settlements, and the newspaper *al-Hayat* functioned as the organizers' mouthpiece. British intelligence, always inclined to discount the potential for popular mobilization, perceived organizers to be 'young men who advocated an extremist policy' but attributed to them a 'lack of cohesion' and a 'lack of capability'.²³ The Congress of Youth, characteristically hedging its bets, sent one delegation to the Balfour Day rally in Nablus and another to a public meeting of the Palestine Arab Party in Haifa, an occasion intended by the party to establish a branch in the city.²⁴

The Nablus meeting attracted a crowd the *Palestine Post* estimated at about 1000; most of them must have stood outside the cinema hall where the meeting was held.²⁵ In addition to Congress of Youth representatives, the rally also attracted delegations from Jaffa, Lydda, Tulkarm, Jenin and Hebron. The occasion thus followed the familiar pattern of Istiqlal Party rallies, but it was also characterized by a new and significant development: The Jaffa AWS, having recently broken away from Fakhri al-Nashashibi's leadership, sent a delegation led by its president, Michel Mitri, and its secretary, the former Istiqlalist George Mansur.²⁶ The Istiqlal Party and the educated nationalists who shared its outlook had given precious little attention to workers and peasants during the party's active period. That attitude had changed since the demonstrations in the autumn of 1933. The presence of the AWS delegation exemplified the degree to which nationalist activists had come to recognize the potential of workers as a political force. It also signified that workers expressed their political and economic aspirations through nationalism.

The editors of Haifa's *al-Karmil* and Jaffa's *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, *al-Difa'* and *Filastin* also attended the rally.²⁷ Clearly, the links between the country's nationalist activists had grown stronger since 1931 and a rally of this sort could command the attention of the press in a way it could not four years earlier. As with the Istiqlal Party rallies, the organizers received letters and telegrams of support from politicians, journalists and leaders of scout groups in Baghdad, Damascus, Cairo

and Amman.²⁸ Speakers denounced the legislative council scheme and, as activists had done at Istiqlal Party rallies, they proposed resolutions of which the crowd approved. The organizers thus intended the resolutions directed at the British and national leadership to create the impression that the initiatives carried a popular mandate. The first of these stated that the continuation of arms smuggling led the Arabs to believe that they should arm themselves in defence. A second resolution re-emphasized Britain's culpability generally, and Wauchope's particularly, for the economic calamity resulting from increasing Jewish immigration and land purchases. It therefore 'recommended' that national associations call a strike for 13 November, the day the high commissioner was scheduled to return from London bearing his plan for the legislative council. Another resolution expressed sympathy and support for Ethiopia, then enduring Italy's invasion.²⁹

By 1935, with practiced regularity activists were using the press, in coordination with public rallies, to put pressure on the national leaders closest to government. Shortly after the rally Zu'aytir sent an open letter to the press addressing 'the presidents of the parties and to the national bodies', though many papers chose not to publish it. The letter transmitted the demand for a general strike on the day of the high commissioner's return to Palestine, as had been resolved at the rally.³⁰ The leaders of the five national parties, with the unity that characterized their actions at this time, had collectively decided not to call a strike on Balfour Day. They were satisfied instead to determine the final form of a memorandum they would submit to the government on the occasion.³¹ On Balfour Day the Palestine Arab Party held its own public meeting in a coffee house in Haifa. Attended by delegations from Jaffa, Jerusalem and northern towns, it attracted several hundred people, a much smaller number than the Nablus rally the same day. Unlike the Nablus rally, the Palestine Arab Party adopted no resolutions³² and sent no representative to Nablus. All this showed reluctance on the part of the unified parties to confront the government as discussions of the legislative council approached.

British intelligence officers in this period slowly became sensitive to the effect on the public of what they termed 'independent young men groups', noting particularly the leadership of Akram Zu'aytir, Hamdi al-Husayni, Ibrahim al-Shanti, Hashim al-Sabi', 'Atif Nurallah and Salim 'Abd al-Rahman. The first four of these were Istiqlalists, and an

intelligence report noted a web of relations connecting them with Michel Mitri's Jaffa AWS and the Rebellious Youth Society in Qalqilya.³³ Nurallah was a youth organizer who had been close to the Haifa Istiqlalists, while 'Abd al-Rahman had been a prewar nationalist and was involved in the Istiqlalist aid society for the Syrian rebels in 1927. All six of the activists were either journalists or, in 'Abd al-Rahman's case, a former newspaper owner.³⁴ All this indicates the importance of the Istiqlalists and their associates in creating the circumstances leading to the general strike of 1936.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Hashim al-Sabi' had written a series of articles in 1930 expressing the need for a newspaper that was not afraid to face down the British, criticize the national leadership or inform the public about how to conduct a nationalist resistance movement. *Al-Hayat*, under Akram Zu'aytir's and Khayr al-Din al-Zirikli's editorial direction, had been the first newspaper to take on this role, and in summer 1931 it had served as the mouthpiece of the nationalist activists concentrated in Nablus. During the period of the Istiqlal Party, *al-'Arab*, owned and edited by 'Ajaj Nuwayhid, had also filled this function. Ibrahim al-Shanti had gained his experience as an editor during his time as a member of the Istiqlal Party when he assisted Sami al-Sarraj (another Syrian Istiqlalist) in Jaffa's *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, a paper that continued to feature the articles of Akram Zu'aytir and his associates in 1935 and 1936. In 1934, al-Shanti established the newspaper *al-Difa'*, which became a main voice of pro-independence nationalism in Palestine and a strident critic of the national leadership. It is indicative of the newspaper-reading Arab public's nationalist and anti-mandate outlook that by 1935 *al-Difa'* had far surpassed *Filastin* as the most widely read paper in the country.³⁵

Anti-mandate and nationalist sentiments had not been confined to the educated and urbanized in the 1933 demonstrations, and certainly were not two years later. A police report asserted late in 1935, 'There are reasons to support a report that the fellahin are becoming interested, to say the least of it, in what politicians describe as "the Arab cause".'³⁶ The sense of fear that permeated the Palestinian Arab public, the fact that a politicized and self-consciously nationalist public sphere had emerged, and the increase in experience and number of activists in the preceding years, all served to generate tremendous pressure on the unified party leadership as it strove to secure its

relationship with the government. These circumstances also revealed in the middle of November 1935 a yawning gap between the national leaders and the nation they purported to represent.

The leaders of the parties were slow to respond to the Nablus group's call for a strike on the occasion of Wauchope's return to the country on 13 November. This is not surprising because the first shipment of the orange export season was scheduled to begin the day after the high commissioner's arrival, and a strike would have been costly to grove owners and merchants.³⁷ Thus, it was only a few days prior to the high commissioner's arrival that Raghīb al-Nashashībī summoned an all-party meeting in response to the clamour for a strike. By then the anti-British demonstrations had begun in Egypt and were on the cusp of becoming riots, soon to be heavily covered in the Palestinian press. The Palestinian party leaders, alternating the sites of their meetings between the offices of the Palestine Arab and the National Defence parties, resolved not to call a strike, claiming no action was needed until they had heard what the high commissioner had to say about the legislative council. The leaders collectively asserted the 'necessity of postponing the response of the nation (*umma*) for a reasonable time after his response'.³⁸ In the wake of the meeting, *Filastin* accused Jamāl al-Husaynī of feigning his enthusiasm for the strike and of being restrained by Hajj Amin.³⁹ British intelligence also noted that, 'It is an open secret in political circles that Yacoub el Ghossein, and, to a certain degree, Jamāl al-Husseini, were not all in favour of the "strike", because an independent group took the lead in suggesting it, and because it was backed by the Istiqlāl Party which desires to reassert its existence.'⁴⁰

Zu'aytir and his associates learnt of the five parties' decision even before they had announced it formally and immediately decided to express their disdain for it and, despite the unified parties' opposition to it, to call a strike. Zu'aytir dictated a statement to the Arabic press by telephone saying that the parties' decision was 'new proof of the bankruptcy of the leadership' and expressing his group's determination to carry out its resolutions. With only two days remaining before the high commissioner's return, the Nablus committee composed a petition of support for their strike and challenge to the parties. They then circulated it and, according to Zu'aytir, hundreds of people signed it. He telegraphed the delegations from other cities that had earlier converged on Nablus for the Balfour Day rally,

informing them of the Nablus committee's insistence on calling the strike. He also dictated an article by telephone to *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* in which he criticized the leadership and called on the 'faithful youth' to shake off the controlling hand of the leadership and to take up the national struggle. This was the first of a string of front-page articles by Zu'aytir in which he castigated and jeered at the coalition of party leaders for their opposition to the strike and for their failure to respond to the expectations of the public.⁴¹

In conjunction with the Nablus committee, and directly rejecting the parties' decision, strike committees again formed in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Qalqilya, Haifa and Acre, all of which telegraphed their support to the Nablus committee. A group of 'the patriotic youth' (*al-shabab al-watani*) noted that some in the city of Haifa intended to follow the parties' directive and refrain from striking. The group accused the unified parties of 'waving around the legislative council, numbing the nerves' of the nation, and diverting its attention from the crisis it faced, just as they had during the municipal elections.⁴² A group in Nablus, apparently not included in Zu'aytir's circle, telegraphed the parties condemning their failure to call a strike.⁴³ With the strike committees and nationalist youth groups demanding the strike, the party leaders in Jaffa issued a declaration restating their decision not to call for it.⁴⁴ In addition, the Jaffa Muslim-Christian Association issued a communiqué signed by a leader of the National Defence Party, 'Umar al-Baytar, and by a leader of the Palestine Arab Party, Alfred Rok, deeming the demands for a strike a 'violation' of the parties' resolution and claiming that 'the nation is steadfast in the decision of its national parties'. The resolution accused the strike organizers of attempting to break the nation's unity and added, 'We are sure the nation will not strike and is prepared to carry out the decisions of the national parties.'⁴⁵ Such certainty was unfounded.

On the day the high commissioner returned to Palestine he found its roads nearly empty of commercial traffic and much, but not all, Arab business and labour at a standstill.⁴⁶ That the strike was not total in every part of the country is not surprising given the mutually contradictory messages the parties' leaders and nationalist activists sent out, and given that it was organized and publicized only two days before Wauchope's arrival. Zu'aytir recorded that the strike in Nablus was comprehensive and that the Athletic Union Club's youth and the club's Khalid Ibn al-Walid scout troop oversaw it.⁴⁷ The AWS in Jaffa,

under Michel Mitri's leadership, also supported the strike and telegraphed Zu'aytir that it was total in that city too.⁴⁸ A telegram from Gaza confirmed that the strike was just as completely observed there and that students of private Arab and government schools had staged a demonstration.⁴⁹ It is significant that in addition to the young nationalist men who encouraged and probably enforced the strike, Sadhij Nassar, a leader of the Arab Women's Association in Haifa, was active in persuading the city's merchants to shutter their shops.⁵⁰

Although not total, the strike signalled a clear repudiation of the unified parties by a considerable segment of the Palestinian Arab public. British intelligence only belatedly recognized the independent nationalists' power, and a report noted, 'The fact that these young men groups were able to influence shopkeepers may indicate the tendency of the public, and cannot be solely due to confusion, or coercion. It may indicate the dissatisfaction of the Arabs in general of the present political status and the growing distrust of the leaders.' For independent youth activists, the report noted, this was a further indication of the degree to which the party leaders were 'weak-kneed' and self-interested.⁵¹ More significantly, *Filastin*, the organ of one of the most pro-government of the parties, acknowledged on its front page that the nation (*al-ummah*) had rejected the parties' leaders and their policies.⁵² British intelligence also recognized the dissatisfaction with the traditionally most accommodating leaders within their own constituencies. In the National Defence Party, anger with Raghib al-Nashashibi for opposing the strike 'induced members of his Secretariat to threaten resignation'. Even in the Christian Orthodox community, its 'Executive Committee' was losing support and was being replaced by youth clubs that advocated 'active measures'.⁵³ After the strike, the British suspended *al-Difa'* for a month because of an article calling for demonstrations on the model of those then taking place in Egypt. In the view of *Filastin*, *al-Difa'*'s offending article only said what every Palestinian Arab was saying.⁵⁴

Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam

Only a week after the strike, mandatory police killed Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam and three members of a secret armed cell he led in a gun battle near the northern village of Ya'bad. The popular preacher had disappeared in recent weeks from the Haifa area where he had a

large following among peasants and wage labourers. Although his death stunned Palestinians, his audacious attempt to launch an armed rebellion fired their imaginations.⁵⁵ It is a cliché in historical accounts of the Palestinian national movement to observe that al-Qassam's killing gave Palestinian Arabs an example of heroic self-sacrifice that no one in the leadership had approached. The observation, however, is no less true for being so frequently made. Al-Qassam's resistance until his death must have contrasted starkly with the unified parties' cooperation, for it came immediately after much of the Palestinian Arab public had rejected the orders of party leaders not to strike.

His attempt to organize a guerrilla movement further confirms the Istiqlal Party's importance as a short-lived coalition of many of the individuals who later led the general strike and supported the 1936 uprising. Akram Zu'aytir, years after al-Qassam's death, claimed that the latter had been a member of the Haifa branch of the party.⁵⁶ *Filastin's* coverage of the branch's establishment in 1933 in fact listed him as a founding member.⁵⁷ Contradicting this, 'Ajaj Nuwayhid much later insisted that al-Qassam did not formally belong to the party, but was widely thought to have done so because of his close friendship with Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim.⁵⁸ There can be no doubt, though, that al-Qassam was associated with the party through his leadership of the Young Men's Muslim Association in Haifa, the membership of which overlapped with the Istiqlal Party.

Although it is difficult to recover how members of al-Qassam's clandestine organization conceived of political community, it seems that the Islamic basis of identity was especially pronounced. In fact, al-Qassam and two of his followers reportedly passed through initiation into the Tijaniyah Sufi order. Since its founding in Morocco in the eighteenth century, the order had spread to sub-Saharan Africa and the Mashriq, though it was not strong in Palestine. Al-Qassam also instructed his followers in the spiritual exercises of the much older Qadiriya order. Over a period that might have exceeded ten years, he developed a network of secret cells, employing the organizational terminology of Sufism, although the Sufi orders in Palestine were in decline by the first decades of the twentieth century. The total membership of these cells perhaps exceeded 200 men, principally active in the northern districts. They might have been responsible for the murders of as many as seven Jews in 1931 and 1932, and al-Qassam's followers were prominent in the revolt of 1936–39.⁵⁹

Al-Qassam was also influenced by salafism, which emphasized the centrality of Arab culture and language to Islamic faith, practice and identity.⁶⁰ He and his more nationalist associates certainly shared this idiom, though it perhaps featured less prominently in his clandestine organization. However, a survivor of the gun battle with the police characterized their struggle as one for 'religion and homeland' (*al-din wa al-watan*), thus demonstrating that to assert a total disassociation of Islamic from territorial nationalist identity would be simplistic.⁶¹ It also bears mentioning that al-Qassam's daughter, Maymanah al-Qassam, delivered a speech at the eastern women's conference in Cairo two years after her father's death. There, in an atmosphere of advocacy for the Arab character of Palestine and for Arab unity, she referred to her father as a 'martyr for the cause of the Arabs'.⁶² Shaykh al-Qassam's conception of political identity cannot be understood by his daughter's comments, but her choice of words and even her presence at the conference suggest that the intellectual atmosphere of the al-Qassam household drew on a number of orientations.

It seems then that the borders of the symbolic domains of Arab, Palestinian and Islamic identity were less distinct in the terminology of al-Qassam's clandestine movement than they were among the nationalist youth. The meaning that the Palestinian public ascribed to al-Qassam's death became evident only a day after the event, at his funeral near Haifa. By that time, the high number of unemployed and collapsing wages had become painfully evident, as had the peaking Jewish immigration. Al-Qassam's funeral became in that environment a massive demonstration, its fury directed at the British. *Filastin* claimed with great exaggeration that 30,000 people attended it. The Arab areas of Haifa went on total strike and some of the crowd at the funeral threw stones at police stations and police cars.⁶³ Demonstrations continued at the same time in the streets of Egyptian cities and Akram Zu'aytir issued a statement to *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* immediately before the funeral calling on the leaders of the unified parties to march in al-Qassam's funeral, noting that in Egypt, the Wafdist leader Mustafa al-Nahas regularly marched at the head of fallen nationalists' funerals. Zu'aytir recorded at the time that he saw none of the party leaders at al-Qassam's burial.⁶⁴

Only four days after the occasion, the leaders of the parties again met the high commissioner. Even *Filastin* noted that the public perceived the meeting of party leaders as weak and that the silence of the

leaders about what had transpired in the high commissioner's office did not raise confidence. The paper did, however, inform its readers that the leaders told the high commissioner 'that they had lost their authority over the people'.⁶⁵ The terminology unmistakably implied that the party leaders saw their function not as representing but as controlling the people.

Towards Civil Disobedience

Over the next two months the Istiqlalists and a loose coalition of independent nationalist youth and workers' organizations held two more rallies on the pattern of those the Istiqlal Party convened and of the 1935 Balfour Day observance. The first of them was in Jaffa and, continuing what the Istiqlal Party had intended to become a tradition, was held on 9 December to mark the British occupation of Jerusalem. Thousands of people crowded the alleys and streets around the Apollo cinema where speakers celebrated the sacrifice of al-Qassam and called for a programme of non-cooperation, demonstrations and resignations of government officials.⁶⁶

Filastin noted only days before that, with *al-Difa'* suspended and *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* threatened with the same penalty, the press barely said what the people felt.⁶⁷ An anonymous writer in the Palestine Arab Party's *al-Liwa'* defended the party leaders in the face of the activists' demands for a campaign of demonstrations. He characterized the leadership's participation in demonstrations as a violation of custom. Zu'aytir attributed the articles to Jamal al-Husayni.⁶⁸ It was also rumoured that the party leaders would discuss the possibility of calling a strike by civil servants in the event that the government did not offer a satisfactory answer to the leadership's petitions. Even *Filastin* was sceptical of the likelihood of this, noting with perhaps some hyperbole that 90 per cent of the civil servants were from the families of the leaders.⁶⁹ Days later, on 21 December, Wauchope presented his proposals for the legislative council to the unified parties' leaders and began the wait for their replies.⁷⁰

The nationalist activists and former Istiqlalists held their next rally in Haifa on 5 January, marking the 40-day observance of al-Qassam's death. Without consulting the unified parties, the activists organized it through the city's Young Men's Muslim Association.⁷¹ Although leaders of the Majlisi faction pleaded with Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim to allow them to address the gathering, he steadfastly refused.⁷² The rally

attracted about 1000, mainly 'lower class', people according to British intelligence, or some 3000 by Akram Zu'aytir's estimate.⁷³ Evidence of the unified parties' frail authority and legitimacy could be seen in that they sought to identify with the image of al-Qassam even as they attempted to position themselves favourably for anticipated negotiations over the legislative council. Thus, the three largest parties, the Palestine Arab Party, the National Defence Party and the Congress of Youth, held their own observance in the city on the same day as the Istiqlalists held theirs.⁷⁴ Even the Reform Party, with its obvious component of Arab mayors, wanted to be associated with al-Qassam's resistance and asked to have a speaker at the parties' observance.⁷⁵ British intelligence reported that about 500 people attended – a fraction of the number attending the Istiqlalist event – and, not surprisingly, that the speeches were moderate.⁷⁶

On 26 January, less than a week after the beginning of the demonstrations and the general strike in Syria, the Nablus committee held a rally in support of Syrian independence that attracted about 600 people. Speakers and delegations included the usual combination of Istiqlalists, their supporters and representatives of the Jaffa AWS.⁷⁷ The meeting delegated its organizers to coordinate a call for a general strike and demonstrations on 4 February with national bodies, clearly intending to spread the protests from Syria to Palestine. In the event, the anticipated demonstrations did not come about, but a one-day strike was widely observed. Teenaged pickets formed wandering bands in several cities to enforce the strike, while Jaffa's lightermen temporarily stopped loading oranges and tobacco workers downed tools.⁷⁸

The 4 February strike and the earlier one of 13 November both demonstrated that much of the organizational framework for a general strike on the model of Syria's was in place in Palestine by the winter of 1936. The framework took the form of nodes of nationalists, the most visible being young men concentrated primarily in cities and larger towns and linked to one another by their shared outlook, the press and Palestine's telephone and telegraph lines. It had taken six years to assemble this network of activists. Akram Zu'aytir, as we saw in Chapter 2, had in 1930 imagined the formation of 'Istiqlalist blocs' comprised of committed nationalists who were not seeking government jobs. These he had envisioned launching protests against the British administration and calling leading politicians to account by orchestrating expressions of nationalist public opinion.

Zu'aytir, like other Istiqlalists, exemplified the schoolteachers and leaders of youth organizations who figured so prominently in constructing this system of working relationships. The Istiqlal Party had also striven to organize just such cells of committed nationalists when it established party branches immediately after the Jaffa congress of national leaders voted to begin a campaign of non-cooperation. The 1933 demonstrations temporarily brought Istiqlalists together with newly emerging independent youth organizations and – perhaps even more importantly – with the elements of the main political factions that found it difficult to reconcile the leadership's complacency with accelerating Jewish immigration and land purchases.

However, at the beginning of February 1936, the activists were unable to bring about an extended nationwide strike and a series of demonstrations as Syrians were then doing.⁷⁹ The principal reason for this was, in all probability, that another two months then remained in the season of Palestine's orange harvest. The growers, merchants, packers, as well as the workers, who were then at the peak of their year's wages, must have all encountered or exerted strong pressures against striking. It is therefore telling that, at that time, the nationalist activists, rather than conducting more rallies, focused their attentions on the Arab workers' organizations. These would clearly be crucial to the maintenance of an extended strike. Zu'aytir's bloc in Nablus, as we have seen, had particularly close relations with Michel Mitri and the AWS, as did other nationalists in Jaffa.⁸⁰ The nationalists also tried to expand their influence among Arab workers beyond the society in Jaffa and to organize them on a countrywide level. This became apparent a few weeks later at a meeting in Jaffa, which brought together representatives of that city's workers and those of Tulkarm, Nablus, Nazareth, Qalqilya, Jerusalem and Majdal. The delegates wrote a 'fundamental programme' (*mashru' asasi*) of Arab workers and delegated to the Palestine Arab Workers Society in Haifa the authority to call a congress of Arab workers and form a general union in Palestine. Alongside Michel Mitri, the Istiqlalists Hamdi al-Husayni, Hashim al-Sabi', George Mansur, Akram Zu'aytir and Nimr al-'Awdah took prominent roles in the proceedings.⁸¹

The prospect of organizing a politically motivated strike must have then seemed possible in part because Arab labour organizations had made considerable inroads among the workers, especially in Jaffa and Haifa. Lockman explains that 'By the end of 1935 almost all the

stevedores and lightermen [of Jaffa] had severed their ties with the [Histadrut's Palestine Labour League] or simply allowed them to lapse, gravitating instead into the orbit of Arab trade unions.⁸² The increasing frequency with which Palestinian workers over the course of that year resorted to strikes and joined Arab unions must have also expanded the compass of opportunity for organizing a strike for political ends.⁸³

In April 1936, as nationalists activists became involved in the first stages of creating a countrywide Arab labour federation, the citrus season ended and employers released the seasonally employed workers into an economy with high unemployment and depressed agricultural prices. The grain harvest provided work for only another month to those who were fortunate enough to have land for cultivation or to be hired as agricultural labourers. Thus, the ratio of potential strike organizers and protesters to employed workers soon shifted more towards the former. The circumstances that would permit nationalist activists to launch a general strike were in place in a way they had never been before. However, they, like the notable politicians, soon found they were reacting to events rather than controlling them.

The General Strike and Uprising of 1936

By the winter of 1935/6, the former Istiqlalists and independent youth groups had created an atmosphere of discomfort for the leaders of the unified parties, who stalled for time as they waited for approval of the legislative council scheme. Things were no easier for Hajj Amin al-Husayni, who strove to maintain his status and that of his faction by convening a council of Palestinian *'ulama'*. This achieved little beyond passing the usual resolutions on land sales, immigration and employing Muslims in government positions. A police report noted, 'Haj Amin's main objects in calling this conference were to counteract the growing influence of the Istiqlal Party, and to enhance his prestige with Government and public, probably in view of the forthcoming elections to the Legislative Council.'⁸⁴

In the spring of 1936 the parties' leaders continued to dicker with Wauchope over the legislative council details, and Wauchope at the time believed that Palestinians widely supported the council.⁸⁵ A government survey of 22 Muslim notables' opinions in the northern districts must have reinforced his faith in the scheme. The survey reported that the Istiqlalists Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim and Subhi al-

Khadra' rejected the legislative council scheme, but fellow Istiqlalist Fahmi al-'Abbushi – mayor of Jenin since 1934 – fully favoured it, and the others supported the plan either completely or with some criticisms. Hajj Khalil Taha, a large landowner and citrus grower who was reputedly influential among the peasants of the Haifa and Acre area, claimed that the public favoured it and urged the government to ignore 'what is written in the papers by a few people who are always causing trouble'.⁸⁶ He must have been surprised to have found himself soon leading a strike committee in Haifa.⁸⁷ Hajj Tahir Qaraman, a landowner and proprietor of Haifa's largest cigarette factory, was also interviewed for the survey. He was recorded as claiming, 'Arab villagers resemble sheep, so if Government can accede to a small proportion of the demands made by responsible leaders the efforts of the small and unscrupulous opposition to the council would be nullified.'⁸⁸ Events quickly proved he could not have been more wrong.

In early April the colonial secretary, J. H. Thomas, authorized Wauchope to select an Arab delegation to go to London to discuss the terms and powers of the legislative council. The parties' leaders fell to arguing among themselves about who would make up the delegation.⁸⁹ As the leaders haggled, on 15 April Arab robbers held up Arab and Jewish-owned cars near Tulkarm. The bandits shot three Jews from one car, one of whom died. Two days later, members of Irgun Bet, a faction of the Haganah, took revenge by murdering two Arabs 'living in a hut near Petach Tikva [east of Tel Aviv]'.⁹⁰ At the same time, Jews attacked Arabs in Tel Aviv and stoned Arab vehicles entering the city. The inhabitants of Jaffa's working-class neighbourhoods and 'the surrounding slum area' were furious. Within the next two days, fighting broke out along the border between Tel Aviv and Jaffa and seven Jews and two Arabs were killed; 39 Jews and 15 Arabs were wounded.⁹¹ On 19 April Arabs whom the government had denied a permit to protest rioted. The mob attacked the small Jewish community of Jaffa, killing nine that day and another five the next. By then four Arabs had been killed either by police or by Jewish attackers.⁹²

As rumours of Jews attacking Arabs in Jaffa were bruited about in the Palestinian Arab community, the doyens of the unified parties could no longer cling to the government in the hope that it would salvage their tenuous claim to national leadership by creating seats for them on the legislative council. Their only hope of a semblance of

legitimacy as a national leadership was to affiliate with the nationalist activists and a programme of civil disobedience directed at bringing about an immediate cessation of Jewish immigration. The 'ayan of Jerusalem, with their ties to the mandatory administration, quickly ceased to constitute the centre of gravity for the Palestinian notable politicians. In fact, Jerusalem was the last of the major Palestinian cities to form one of the new national committees (*lajan qawmiyah*) to oversee the city's compliance in a nationwide strike.

On 19 April, as fighting broke out in Jaffa-Tel Aviv, Akram Zu'aytir and his circle met leaders of the city in a Nablus soap factory to discuss the organization and goals of a general strike. The leaders included the mayor and National Defence Party leader 'Abd al-Razzaq Tuqan, Dr Mustafa Bashnaq of the Palestine Arab Party and 'Abd al-Latif Salah of the National Bloc. They agreed that Nablus should take the leadership of the national movement on a national (*qawmi*), rather than partisan (*hizbi*) basis. It was to confront primarily Great Britain as the true source of the country's distress, rather than Zionism alone. The Nablus leadership would contact activists and civic leaders in the other cities, towns and villages to coordinate with them without consultation with the parties. No one was to calm the situation until the country had achieved its goal, which was the complete cessation of Jewish immigration. Calling their committee in Nablus the national committee (*al-lajnah al-qawmiyah*), the group called upon other cities and towns of Palestine to form strike committees on the model of Nablus. Zu'aytir then went to the athletic union and announced to a crowd the results of the meeting.⁹³

The next day, as a demonstration took place before the government house in Nablus, the city's national committee began to decide the terms of the strike, how to enforce it and to alleviate the hardships it imposed. The committee designated Zu'aytir to telegraph his activist contacts in other Palestinian cities and to ask them to form national committees. He learnt by telephone that Jaffa, like Nablus, had already formed a strike committee composed of leading members of the Palestine Arab Party, National Defence Party, Congress of Youth and Istiqlal Party.⁹⁴ Representatives of similar national committees in other cities and towns telegraphed Zu'aytir a day later, on 21 April, confirming their existence and their commitment to carrying out the strike. These included national committees in Acre, Haifa, Hebron, Nazareth, Ramleh, Beisan and Qalqilya. With the strike committees

functioning, the leaders of the unified parties issued a statement calling for the general strike to be maintained until immigration ceased. Several leaders of the Istiqlal Party quickly met in the Arab Bank in Jerusalem and also issued a statement calling for the entire country to support a general strike and demanding the convening of a national congress.⁹⁵ It was not, however, until 22 April that Zu'aytir received word by phone from Tahsin Kamal ('our representative in Jerusalem') that Jerusalem had finally formed a national committee. Zu'aytir noted with satisfaction that its members were credible nationalists and that most were not of the mufti's group.⁹⁶

Zu'aytir and his associates also planned to try to turn the strike into an armed uprising. Meeting secretly and apart from the other Nablus national committee members, Zu'aytir, Mamduh al-Sukhn and Wasif Kamal (all teachers or former teachers at the Najah School) decided that Zu'aytir would be in charge of public actions and that the other two would 'initiate acts of violence against the government in Nablus'. For some time prior to this, they, with Nabih al-'Azmah's help, had solicited the advice of a bomb maker in Damascus. Al-Sukhn had been trained in chemistry and took on the responsibility of contacting some trusted youth and students secretly to manufacture some pipe bombs and the like.⁹⁷ The contents of the discussion suggest that, in the earliest stage of the revolt, there was little contact between the armed groups and minimal preparation for military action.⁹⁸

An assertive national movement had by this time confronted the national parties' leaders and Hajj Amin al-Husayni. Finally, on the night of 25 April, they gathered in Jerusalem with former leaders of the Istiqlal Party and representatives from other cities and towns. They there formed the Arab Higher Committee (*al-Lajnah al-'Arabiyyah al-'Uliya*), comprised of Hajj Amin al-Husayni (president), Alfred Rok, Jamal al-Husayni, Dr Husayn al-Khalidi, Ya'qub Faraj, 'Abd al-Latif Salah, Ya'qub al-Ghusayn, Ahmad Hilmi (treasurer) and 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi (secretary).⁹⁹ The factional leaders thus ostensibly took up the leadership of a movement that was in fact leading them. The consent of Hajj Amin and the unified parties to form the Arab Higher Committee must have been hastened by the national committee of Nablus, in coordination with activists in Haifa, having at the same time planned to convene a congress of all the national committees to elect a supreme committee for directing the general strike and demonstrations.¹⁰⁰ However, Hajj Amin and the party

leaders gathered in Jerusalem that night succeeded in preventing the elections for the committee.¹⁰¹ Thus, for a short while, the client politicians preserved their apparent status as intermediaries between the government and the people.

Destroying a System of Colonial Control

The formation of the Arab Higher Committee, intended by its founders to salvage their positions as representatives of the Palestinian Arabs to the government, in fact signalled that the destruction of a system of colonial control was well under way. After that point, the leaders of the unified parties and other notable politicians were no longer able to manage the contradictory demands of restraining popular outrage and thereby proving their utility to the government, while at the same time claiming to be the representatives of the people. Within the next two weeks, activists held large public meetings in Jerusalem, Ramallah, al-Birah, Bethlehem and other towns, including villages near Nablus. These gatherings passed resolutions calling for a programme of non-payment of taxes, thus taking up the non-cooperation programme advocated by the Istiqlal Party three years previously.¹⁰² Although High Commissioner Wauchope warned Hajj Amin al-Husayni and the leaders of the parties in a private meeting not to take any illegal action, the Arab Higher Committee consented to the demand of the national committees and, on 8 May, convened a congress in Jerusalem. There the representatives of the national committees authorized a campaign of civil disobedience that added the non-payment of taxes to the general strike. Hajj Amin and the rest of the party leaders were thus obliged to attend and to accept this contravention of the law.¹⁰³ Weeks later, the high commissioner admitted to the Colonial Office that the Arab Higher Committee exercised a moderating but limited influence over the movement and that policy decisions were in fact initiated by representatives of the national committees.¹⁰⁴

At the same time, mandatory police began to use live fire against Palestinian demonstrators, thus intensifying the recourse to violence. In the cities, Arab cells burned and bombed Jewish businesses and government buildings.¹⁰⁵ One of these cells seems to have typified the independent youth groups. A group of friends, including the 18-year-old Bahjat Abu Gharbiyah, had formed it in 1934. The son of an Arab Ottoman official and a Turkish mother, he had studied in private and

government schools, joined scout troops and athletic clubs, learnt the Arab nationalist anthems of the time, and read voraciously about the American, French and Russian revolutions. He had also attended lessons in Haifa given by Shaykh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam, who visited Abu Gharbiyah's home. At an early age, he had been attracted to what he called 'the Sufism of the fighters' (*sufiyat al-munadilin*), finding inspiration in the sayings of the eighth-century mystic Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyah. His group began burning Jewish-owned businesses in Jaffa at the end of 1935 and beginning of 1936. Although they maintained no relationship with Jamal al-Husayni, they were aware that he was secretly urging youths to take action of this sort.¹⁰⁶

Armed actions quickly spread to rural areas, where bands began to attack transport and communications. By mid-May, the formerly disparate acts of sabotage and violence had crystallized into a full insurgency waged from Arab quarters of mixed cities as well as from the Galilee and the hills of Nablus and Jerusalem.¹⁰⁷ It became clear that the government still hoped to rescue the Arab Higher Committee from its dilemma when, in late May, it arrested 61 leaders of national committees and exiled them to rural areas, whereas no higher committee members, with the exception of the Istiqlalists 'Awni Abd al-Hadi and 'Izzat Darwazah, was arrested. The government's sparing the Arab Higher Committee members only undermined their credibility before the Palestinians who participated in or supported the strike and revolt. Although the mufti publicly emphasized his opposition to the use of violence, the high commissioner came to believe during the summer of 1936 that, out fear of political isolation, Hajj Amin had begun quietly to lend his support to the revolt. Despite this, changing circumstances at the end of the summer saved him for another year from dismissal from his post.¹⁰⁸

In September, the British government landed another full division of troops in Palestine, which soon took the initiative against the rebel bands and succeeded in reducing the flow of arms and ammunition to them. At the same time, the hardships of the general strike were severe enough for some of the Palestinian leadership to feel that they could call for its end without appearing to be entirely self-interested or disloyal to the national movement. Therefore, several members of the Arab Higher Committee individually suggested to Wauchope that if he could successfully elicit from a number of Arab rulers a request that the Palestinian leaders call for the end of the strike and the

revolt, then the higher committee would comply. After the intervention of Iraqi foreign minister Nuri al-Sa'id, Amir 'Abdullah of Transjordan and King Ibn Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia, and after obtaining a promise from the British government to send a committee of inquiry to Palestine, the Arab Higher Committee called off the strike in early October and fighting soon ceased.¹⁰⁹ The commission of inquiry arrived in Palestine in November 1936, led by a former secretary of state for India, Lord William Robert Peel.

The Peel Commission, appearing at first to represent a minor success for Hajj Amin and other factional leaders, soon showed itself to be a major turning point in British policy and one that required the dissolution of the system of colonial control that had underpinned the Majlisi position in Palestinian Arab politics. Publishing its findings in July 1937, the commission determined that the conflicting ambitions of the two national movements could not be reconciled in one state and that, therefore, Palestine should be partitioned. The act of partition was to create a Jewish state, including the greater part of the Galilee, the coastal plain and the Jezreel Valley, constituting nearly 20 per cent of Palestine. Particularly ominous to Palestinian Arabs, but encouraging to the Zionists, was the recommendation for an exchange of populations between the two states, by force if necessary. Bethlehem and a number of strategic or sensitive enclaves were to remain under direct British control. The remaining part of Palestine was to be united with Transjordan, apparently under Amir 'Abdullah, in a single Arab state.¹¹⁰ The partition scheme, representing considerable continuity with British practice in securing areas of strategic or commercial value, was thus founded on two institutions: a European settler community and a local monarchy, both dependent on Great Britain for their preservation.

Imperial planners evidently intended Amir 'Abdullah to replace Hajj Amin al-Husayni as the preferred intermediary between Palestinian Arabs and the British. Thus, the SMC no longer served its former function. In July 1937, the same month the Peel Commission published its report, the Palestine government issued an order to arrest the mufti. The government allowed him to remain cornered in the Haram al-Sharif until he secretly fled to Lebanon three months later.¹¹¹ At the same time, the government placed the administration of *awqaf* funds under more direct British supervision, and it allowed the post of president of the SMC to remain vacant.¹¹² The nexus of

influence constituted by British political domination and the Majlisi network of patronage, linked together in the person of Hajj Amin al-Husayni, was thereby fully dismantled.

Another casualty of this shift in imperial policy was Sir Arthur Wauchope, who had so assiduously monitored and elaborated on the system of colonial control in his gentleman-to-gentleman agreements with Hajj Amin. Wauchope's reluctance to use the full force of the army and his prolonged effort to restore relations with the notables during the revolt cost him the confidence of high officials at the Colonial Office.¹¹³ He tendered his resignation as high commissioner in 1937, to be replaced early the next year by Sir Harold MacMichael, a veteran of colonial administration in the Sudan, the former governor of Tanganyika and the only high commissioner of Palestine to have known Arabic.¹¹⁴

At the time of his appointment, MacMichael faced a rebellion that had resumed with even greater ferocity and, within the year, the British government was forced to recognize that the partition plan was unworkable. By autumn 1938, parts of major Palestinian cities were under rebel control, as were the hills of Nablus and parts of Galilee. The civilian MacMichael showed that he was much more willing to use the military than the highly decorated General Wauchope. By deploying 20,000 troops, cooperating tacitly with the Haganah, and resorting to aerial bombardments and collective punishments, the Palestine government had crushed the revolt by May 1939. A final attempt by the British to bring together Arab and Zionist leaders at the St James conference in London collapsed in failure as the army finally suppressed the insurgency.¹¹⁵

With a crisis developing on the European continent that portended war, the British government resorted to a unilateral declaration of policy in the White Paper of 1939. Although the Arab Higher Committee rejected it as insufficient, there can be no doubt that the White Paper made some concessions to the demands of Palestinian Arabs. In contrast to the document of the mandate and the Balfour Declaration, both of which referred to the totality of the population of Palestine as Jews and non-Jews, the White Paper acknowledged 'the two peoples in Palestine, Arabs and Jews', and it set out the objective of establishing an independent 'Palestine State' in not more than ten years. It limited Jewish immigration to 75,000 over the next five years, after which further immigration was subject to the acquies-

cence of 'the Arabs of Palestine'. The high commissioner also received 'general powers to prohibit and regulate transfers of land' in order to preserve for Arab cultivators 'their existing standards of life' and to prevent the creation of 'a considerable landless Arab population'.¹¹⁶ These concessions came at great cost to Palestinian Arabs. Roughly 5000 Arabs were killed in the revolt and 10,000 wounded. The uprising and its suppression exhausted the Arab community's economic resources, and the government deported or imprisoned much of the Palestinian Arab leadership. One authority has estimated that, by the revolt's end, more than 10 per cent of the adult male Arab population had been killed, wounded, exiled or imprisoned. Palestinian Arab society had still not recovered from these losses when, slightly less than a decade later, it suffered another, even more devastating defeat.¹¹⁷

Conclusions

During the general strike, Musa al-ʿAlami, assistant to the chief secretary of the Palestine government, reportedly heard High Commissioner Wauchope comment with wonder, 'All the members of the Istiqlal Party are in detention, but the strike movement continues to intensify.' Al-ʿAlami responded, 'The strike movement is from the spirit of the people, and the Istiqlal Party supported it.'¹¹⁸ In some sense, al-ʿAlami was correct. Well before the time of the general strike a significant number of Palestinian Arabs had lost faith in the leaders of the main political factions and were prepared to bypass them in a confrontation with the government. Istiqlal Party members had joined and organized the party in this belief. The Arab factional leaders' secretly hostile but publicly supportive response to the party's non-cooperation programme demonstrated that they also perceived that the public was ready to compel the government to change its support for the Jewish national home. The 1933 demonstrations and the popular strike in defiance of the party leaders in November 1935 further proved al-ʿAlami's claim.

Although his assessment that 'the strike movement was from the spirit of the people' must have been disturbing (if trite) to Wauchope under the circumstances, it does not fully convey the Istiqlalists' importance to the incidents of popular mobilization. The 'spirit of the people' or even 'the people' are not, of course, phenomena that exist apart from the minds that conceive them. People create such shared conceptions from existing cultural resources in response to

constantly changing alignments of constraints, opportunities and incentives. The Istiqlalists' importance lies in their exercise of this agency. They articulated their belief that political community in the modern world naturally and necessarily meant association on the basis of nationhood, and they undertook to teach this to a public they imagined as developing the capacity to express a national will to its representatives and to the government.

The intentions of activists like the Istiqlalists to organize people on the basis of Arab national identity were not, however, sufficient in themselves for the successful introduction of innovations in political advocacy and in political association. These changes became possible when crises taxed the abilities of existing institutions to represent the interests of their constituencies. The factional leaders, in their efforts to maintain their status in changing circumstances, turned to Arab nationalism as their primary resource for the organization and control of their followings. The creation of the Congress of Arab Youth was an early example of this, and it constituted recognition of the primacy of Arab nationalism in the political identity of the expanding stratum of educated Arabs. The strategy was taken further by the establishment of four more nationalist political parties and a second Arab nationalist labour union by the summer of 1935, and by the affiliation of those associations with the national committees in 1936.

I have argued that the popular mobilization that resulted in the national committees and the general strike of 1936 represented the outcome of a process that was under way by 1930. At that time, mostly younger nationalists within the YMMAs began to conceive of a new organization dedicated to challenging the government's policies and coordinating groups of like-minded activists across Palestine. Incidents of successful mobilization, separated by longer periods of demobilization, characterized the process of establishing the organizational framework for so unremitting a protest as the general strike. The process's episodic nature was due in part to the fact that it entailed a learning experience for the nationalists and for the public as both developed new associations and a repertoire for the expression of dissent. The continuing but unevenly diminishing capacity of the notable leaders to restrain their constituencies was also evident in the periods of demobilization. Furthermore, convergences of contingent events such as the acceleration of Jewish immigration or peaks in the cycle of employment in the citrus industry figured prominently

in people's determination of whether to become involved in political action. This also contributed to the non-linear and sporadic character of the development of popular protest. Nonetheless, the nationalist mobilization of Palestinian Arabs was compressed into a remarkably short period of time. The rapidity with which it occurred must be understood above all in terms of the stresses placed on Palestinian Arab society by Zionist colonization and also by the fact that Arab political activists had models of nationalist mobilization to follow that were drawn not only from Western Europe and the Americas, but also from contemporary examples in Syria, Egypt and India.

Nationalism provided such a powerful set of symbols for the expression of political community primarily because it had become a marker for the acculturation that authorized leadership and prepared one for participation in public life. By the 1930s, the concept of the nation thoroughly penetrated the emerging public sphere and, especially, the modern educational curricula that students studied in government, missionary and private Arab-Islamic schools. The introduction of elements of the nationalist worldview and their association with personal and collective power, did not begin in the interwar period, but had taken place during nearly a century of Ottoman reform as the empire was absorbed into the world economic system and the European balance of power. For the Ottoman elites of the Young Turk period, history had come to be understood in terms of the idea of progress, and they viewed the Western European powers as exemplars of that progress. In the interwar period, the establishment of the League of Nations was predicated on the principle that the modern world would be properly composed of nation-states; the attainment of independence consequently implied the realization of nationhood. The Istiqlalists and other activists thus participated in a variety of global high culture in which national identity was regarded as an attribute of modernity.

Among the educated, mostly younger, Palestinian Arabs a sustained and abiding sense of membership in the Arab and Palestinian Arab nation certainly existed by the 1930s as a dimension of individual identity. It is doubtful that this could be said of urbanized workers, seasonal wage labourers and peasants, who on a daily basis did not engage in activities that were directed at countrywide affairs. Nonetheless, they too experienced deep changes in their perceptions of space and time, and perhaps even of history. Their frequent migra-

tions from villages to orange groves, construction sites, port facilities and factories brought them into proximity with one another. No less than the Ottoman (and other) imperial bureaucrats who had crossed paths on their peregrinations from province to capital, Palestinian Arab workers had the capacity to see themselves as a part of a collectivity whose horizons of concern extended beyond their villages of origin. But even more significantly, the awareness of the collectivity had to be interpreted in the face of Jewish immigration, the growth of Tel Aviv and Jewish neighbourhoods of Haifa, and the competition with the new immigrants for jobs. Palestinian Arab workers must have universally been aware of the Zionist movement and its goal of achieving sovereignty in Palestine. Could they have not had a sense of belonging to a shared Palestinian homeland under such conditions?

The number of Palestinian Arabs who by the mid-1930s participated in demonstrations and the general strike was a relatively small proportion of the country's total Arab population of more than 900,000. Yet, those who became politicized or who participated in contentious politics were marshalled and synchronized by explicitly nationalist associations, and the demands they made on the government were made on behalf of a nation. The Istiqlal Party, the Congress of Youth and the independent nationalist youth groups were the most visible agents of these mobilizations.

They did, however, regularly appropriate existing Islamic associations. Examples included the nationalists' organizing efforts within private Islamic schools and in the YMMAs, and the use of Jaffa's grand mosque as a staging area for the 1933 demonstration. That no religious association undertook a parallel role in initiating demonstrations or linking activists and participants across varied associations and locations by no means implies that Islamic belief and identity were weakening during this period. The SMC and its president were effective in the machinery of colonial control precisely because of the continuing power of Islam as a religious faith, an aspect of collective identity and a source of authority. This fact was not lost on Istiqlalists like Hamdi al-Husayni and Subhi al-Khadra', who characterized sectarian political organization as a strategy of foreign domination and a relic of an older social order. We have also seen that the Muslim Istiqlalists were closely involved in Islamic civic and cultural associations. Their claim that Arab nationalism was the proper basis for political association in the modern era was neither

intended nor interpreted as denigrating Islam. Further, their relationships with al-Qassam represented a point of contact with an organization in which Islamic identity clearly did facilitate resistance to colonialism, although the symbolism of Islam in that context seems to have reinforced that of Arab and Palestinian identities more than it competed with them.

The complexity that characterized the relationship between Islam and Arab nationalism in the minds of the Istiqlalists also characterized their conceptualization of Palestinian identity in its relationship with Arab nationalism. The Istiqlalists, like many of their contemporaries, believed in an Arab nation that would not be fully realized until it was unified. In several instances, Istiqlalists described Palestine as a foreign, imperialist creation and asserted that the territory should be properly called South Syria. However, this was also an aspect of a practical strategy that sought to gain independence for Palestine by including it in an Arab unity scheme that centred on newly independent Iraq. Furthermore, the Istiqlal Party's bylaw explicitly referred to Palestine as a distinct political entity that should function under its own parliamentary government and within an Arab federation. At the time, the existence of Palestine as an emerging nation-state was not something that needed to be proved. It was recognized as such by the League of Nations and by the dominant regional power, Great Britain. Palestine had acquired distinct borders, its own administration and currency, and Palestinian passports for its citizens. From the point of view of the Istiqlalists and other Arab nationalists, the primary issue was certainly not the existence of Palestine as a prospective state, but rather the country's Arab character.

The nationalist activists did not directly bring about the rural armed uprising of 1936. Neither can the intensifying current of Arab nationalism that was so pronounced by the spring of 1936 be presumed to have maintained itself by its own momentum. During the revolt, especially in its later stage, the emerging public sphere could function only weakly and the organized demonstrations and strikes were no longer the means for making demands on the government. The revolt's armed bands expressed solidarity through conceptions of class, religion and kinship, although these certainly did not eclipse nationalism entirely.¹¹⁹

The Istiqlal Party and its individual members were profoundly

important to the processes of articulating nationalism to and for the Palestinian public. The party constituted a novel form of political association in Palestine, and it represented the leading edge in a new style of politics. The centrality of the Istiqlalists to these processes should not, however, be overstated. Part of the value of a study of the party lies in elucidating the outlook, culture and methods of the many other Palestinian Arab nationalists who responded to the party's ideas and programme, but who have not left as clear and recoverable a record of their own experiences. By 1936, the nationalism of the Istiqlal Party had become more typical than exceptional among the educated, and the number of Palestinians willing to enter the realm of activism had reached a critical mass.

Appendices

Appendix 1: A Partial List of Members of the Istiqlal Party¹

Leadership Committee:

ʿAwni ʿAbd al-Hadi	ʿIzzat Darwazah	Fahmi al-ʿAbbushi
Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim	Subhi al-Khadraʾ	Akram Zuʿaytir
Muʿin al-Madi	ʿAjaj Nuwayhid	Hamdi al-Husayni
Dr Salim Salamah	Harbi al-Ayyubi	

Nablus:

Dr Sidqi Milhis	ʿAdil Kanaʿan	Muhammad ʿAli Darwazah
Mamduh al-Sukhn	Rashid Abu Ghazalah	

Jaffa:

Nimr al-ʿAwdah	Ibrahim al-Shanti	George Mansur
George Matar	Hashim al-Sabiʿ	

Haifa:

Tawfiq Mansi	Muhammad ʿAli Salih	Ramzi ʿAmir
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Gaza:

Khadr al-Jaʿfarawi	Sami al-Husayni	Hilmi al-Mubashir
Raʿfit Burnu		

Appendix 2: Biographical Profiles of Identifiable Members of the Istiqlal Party

ʿAwni ʿAbd al-Hadi

ʿAbd al-Hadi was born in 1882 to one of the leading rural families of the Jabal Nablus area. The family was historically aligned with the Qaysi political faction and centred in ʿArabah. It held sway over roughly 17 villages in the area including Jenin, where the al-ʿAbbushi family was also influential. By the time of ʿAbd al-Hadi’s birth, his immediate family had moved to Nablus.²

He received his early education in Nablus and was a classmate of ʿIzzat Darwazah. ʿAbd al-Hadi’s father sent him to Istanbul to complete his preparatory schooling. There he entered the Mülkiye. He was sent in 1908, before completing his courses, to study law at the University of Paris. He and several other Arab students established al-Fatat in Paris and he participated in the first Arab Congress there.³

ʿAbd al-Hadi remained in Paris until the end of the war when Amir Faysal bin Husayn came to Paris to represent the Arab national movement to the peace conference. ʿAbd al-Hadi then became Faysal’s personal secretary and continued in this position during the period of the independent Arab government in Damascus. ʿAbd al-Hadi helped to reorganize al-Fatat in Damascus and to establish the Istiqlal Party.

After the fall of Faysal’s government, ʿAbd al-Hadi served briefly as personal secretary to Amir ʿAbdullah in Transjordan. He then returned to Palestine, opened his law practice in Jerusalem and served as secretary to the Arab Executive.⁴ ʿAbd al-Hadi knew Turkish, French, English and at least some German.

Fahmi al-ʿAbbushi

Like ʿAbd al-Hadi, al-ʿAbbushi was from a rural notable family of the Jabal Nablus region.⁵ The family was based in Jenin and al-ʿAbbushi served as the town’s representative on the Arab Executive, and in the fifth and seventh Palestine Arab congresses.⁶ He was a student at the

Kulliyah al-Islamiyah in Beirut in 1912.⁷ Thus, he was born probably in the middle 1890s.

Harbi al-Ayyubi

Al-Ayyubi was born in Jerusalem in 1892 and educated in the city's primary and secondary schools. An avid student of Turkish, he went on to the Harbiye in Istanbul and graduated as an officer. He joined the Arab revolt in 1917 and remained in Damascus until the fall of Faysal's government. He returned to Palestine, taking up residence in Jaffa and working as a municipal clerk and journalist.⁸

Muhammad Nimr al-ʿAwdah

Al-ʿAwdah was a teacher in the Jaffa government secondary school. He resigned in 1935 after the death of Shaykh al-Qassam and the whipping of two student nationalists. At this time, he joined the Communist Party and remained active with it until 1939. He participated in the revolt of 1936–39 and, after an exile in Iraq ending in 1941, he returned to Palestine and helped organize the defence of Jaffa in the 1948 war. Given that he did not gain notoriety as a political activist until after the time of the Istiqlal Party, he was likely to have been one of the younger members.⁹

Muhammad ʿAli Darwazah

The younger brother of ʿIzzat Darwazah, Muhammad ʿAli was born in Nablus in 1894 or 1895. He attended the city's primary and secondary schools. In 1911 he went to Beirut to study at the imperial teachers' training college. The next year he and a group of students became involved in the Beirut reform movement with its Arab nationalist overtones. This led him into conflict with the faculty at the college and resulted in his suspension. During the war, Darwazah was mobilized as a reserve officer while in Damascus shortly before his graduation. His older brother was able to have him transferred to the department of telegraph and mail in Jenin to spare him military duty and to shelter him from government purges of suspected Arab separatists.

In 1920 he joined his brother in Damascus and was chosen as a member of al-Fatat. After the expulsion of Faysal's government, the two brothers returned to Nablus and established a commercial enter-

prise. Muhammad 'Ali Effendi gained certification as a teacher and was appointed to a position in al-Najah School in the 1927/8 school year. He remained in that position until 1933. During the revolt he helped his brother with the exiled leadership in Damascus. Both fled to Turkey in mid-1939 and remained there for almost four years. They later established a trading company with branches in Amman, Damascus and Beirut.¹⁰

Muhammad 'Izzat Darwazah

Darwazah was born in Nablus in 1887 to a middle-class mercantile family. He was educated in the city's government primary and preparatory schools. He was proficient in Ottoman Turkish by the time he was appointed to a position in the imperial post and telegraph service in 1903. He also acquired a basic knowledge of French, which he strengthened in the years following the end of his formal education.

Shortly after the Ottoman constitutional revolution of 1908, Darwazah joined the CUP. He left it in 1910 because of a Turkish nationalist tendency within the association and supported the Beirut reform committee. Darwazah was among the organizers of the Nablus branch of the Decentralization Party. In 1916, while serving with the Ottoman forces in Sinai, he joined al-Fatat. After the war, he returned to Nablus and, in June 1919, went to Damascus to participate in the Syrian congress. He remained there working for the new Arab government until July 1920. He again took up residence in Nablus where he served as inspector of *awqaf* for the SMC and director of al-Najah School while engaged in commerce.

He produced several works of fiction as well as numerous books on Arab history, Islam and other topics.¹¹ He died in 1984.

Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim

Al-Hajj Ibrahim began life in Haifa in 1889. Although largely self-educated, he studied at the city's government secondary school and at the Alliance Israelite school. He learnt Turkish and worked first in the public debt department and later as an official on the Haifa spur of the Hijaz railway. After the war he was active in commerce and journalism in Haifa. He established the Haifa branch of the Arab Bank in 1931. His support for the general strike and revolt led to his exile to the Seychelles in 1936. He died in 1953.¹²

Hamdi al-Husayni

Al-Husayni was the son of a *qadi* who had worked in high positions in the Shaykh al-Islam administration. His extended family was one of the most influential in Gaza. Born in 1899, al-Husayni studied first in the city's government primary school and then at a Protestant missionary school run by Habib al-Khuri. On graduating he took a teaching job at the Islamic College in Jerusalem. Literature and languages held a particular fascination for him and he gained some facility in Turkish, Hebrew, Greek, Spanish, Italian, French and German.

The war began soon after his graduation, and al-Husayni joined the Arab revolt in 1917. He returned to Palestine at the end of the war and edited *al-Karmil* in 1918.¹³ He obtained a teaching position in the government boys' school in Gaza, where he taught history and Arabic language. His relationship with the department of education was turbulent because of his nationalist activities and by the end of 1926 he had left government service.¹⁴

He was known from this time onward for his provocative and nationalistic journalism, and for his contacts with the Palestine Communist Party. Although he never joined the party, he seems to have been deeply influenced by the Marxist worldview.¹⁵ His contacts with the Communist Party continued until 1948.¹⁶

Subhi al-Khadra'

Al-Khadra' was another of the Istiqlalists from a notable family of rural origins that had moved in recent generations to the city.¹⁷ He was born in Safad in 1895 and attended the city's primary and secondary schools. He next studied at al-Madrasah al-Sultaniyah in Beirut where his teachers included Rafiq al-Tamimi, a founder of al-Fatat, and 'Adil al-ʿAzmah. After his graduation from the Sultaniyah, he went to the imperial war college in Istanbul and graduated with a commission in the Ottoman army. During the war, he served in southern Palestine. He was captured by the allied forces and joined the Arab revolt, during which he was wounded several times.

Al-Khadra' served in the directorate of public security in Damascus at the time of Faysal's administration. He joined al-Fatat and the Istiqlal Party while in Damascus and married the sister of his Istiqlalist colleague Fu'ad Salim. When the French and Arab forces clashed at Maysalun, al-Khadra' was among the combatants.

He was employed by the Palestine government in the police force after his return, but used his position to help smuggle arms and money to the Syrian revolt. He attended the Palestine law college and graduated in 1931. In addition to his membership in the Istiqlal Party, his political activities included representing Safad in the Arab Executive. He was sentenced to internal exile and prison for his activities during the general strike and revolt of 1936–39. He likewise served on the military committee that directed Palestinian actions during the 1948 war. He died in Damascus six years later.¹⁸

Muʿin al-Madi

Al-Madi was also from a family of long-established rural notables who moved to an urban environment. After completing primary school in his birthplace of Ijzim, his family moved to Haifa where he continued his studies at the city's secondary school. He pursued his studies further at the Mülkiye in 1908 and graduated four years later. From this it can be deduced that al-Madi was born in 1890 or a few years before.¹⁹ While studying in Istanbul, he joined an Arab cultural society and helped in the publication of its magazine. He also participated in a student demonstration to protest against a Turkish nationalist tendency among some of the students.

After his graduation, he served in the Ottoman civil service first in Anatolia, and later in Acre and Banias. Al-Madi joined al-Fatat following the execution of suspected Arab separatists during the war. He was tried in a military court for his ties to the Arab national movement, but because he was able first to destroy incriminating documents in his possession and because of his father's influence he was acquitted of the charges. He passed the rest of the war in Damascus living under an assumed name.

With the establishment of Faysal's government, al-Madi served as governor of al-Karak and participated in the establishment of the Palestine Arab Society (*Jamʿiyat Filastin al-ʿArabiyyah*) in Damascus and also in the reconstituted al-Fatat. He represented Haifa in the Syrian general congress.

Al-Madi again made his home in Haifa after the expulsion of the Arab government from Damascus, and he served as one of Haifa's representatives in the Arab Executive. He was sent to Baghdad to garner support for Palestine during the 1936–39 revolt. A British pardon allowed him to return to Palestine in 1946, when he resumed

political activities on behalf of Hajj Amin's faction. He died in Damascus in 1957.²⁰

George Mansur

Mansur was one of several Christians who joined the Istiqlal Party in Palestine. He was born in Nazareth in 1905 and was educated at the local primary school. He next attended a private English school in Jerusalem.²¹ In 1926, he went to Iraq and worked as a teacher in the state school system. He travelled two years later to England to improve his English. Afterwards, he returned to Palestine and opened a shoe factory in Jaffa, which he ran during his involvement with the Istiqlal Party.²² He went again to Iraq to teach English and became involved in the nationalist youth organizations there. After a short time in Iraq, he returned to Palestine and worked closely with Michel Mitri in the establishment of the Arab Workers Society. He was a fighter in the 1936–39 revolt and fled to Beirut with Hajj Amin al-Husayni.²³ Mansur died in Beirut in 1963.²⁴

Dr Sidqi Milhis

Dr Milhis was born around 1887 in Nablus and was a long-time friend of ʿIzzat Darwazah. The former graduated from the imperial medical college in Istanbul in the final years of the empire. He joined al-Fatat some time before the end of the war. After the British occupation of Palestine, he opened a clinic in Nablus.²⁵

ʿAjaj Nuwayhid

A Lebanese Druze, Nuwayhid was born in Ra's al-Matn in 1897. He received his primary education there at a missionary school, afterwards attending the English Friends (Quaker) School in Barmana, Lebanon. Nuwayhid acquired a strong command of English. Between 1914 and 1916, he studied at the Suq al-Gharb school and received his certificate of secondary education.

He went to Damascus during the period of Faysal's government and joined al-Fatat. He also helped establish the magazine *al-Qalam* in 1919. With the fall of the Damascus government, he went to Jerusalem. Nuwayhid found work as the secretary to the SMC and later as assistant inspector of *awqaf*. In 1924 he registered at the law college in Jerusalem where he earned a degree. He opened his law office in

Jerusalem in 1936. In addition to editing *al-Arab* between 1932 and 1934, he also worked as a correspondent for Cairo's *al-Ahram*.

Nuwayhid was imprisoned during the 1936–39 revolt as an instigator of resistance activities. After the publication of the 1939 White Paper, he cooperated with the Palestine government and worked for the Arabic section of the Palestine broadcast service. He worked in high positions in the Jordanian government between 1949 and 1959. Nuwayhid was the author and translator of numerous works.²⁶

Hashim al-Sabi'

Al-Sabi' was one of the youngest members of the Istiqlal Party. Born in 1912, he received all his education in the postwar period. His primary schooling began in his hometown of Qalqilya. Al-Najah School provided his secondary education, and under the influence of 'Izzat Darwazah and other faculty members, al-Sabi' acquired strong nationalist sensibilities.

He was outspoken, impulsive and, by his own account, precocious. While still a student at al-Najah, he contributed short articles to the press and saw them published. Al-Sabi' had hoped to attend AUB like many of his fellow students, but circumstances took him to al-Azhar in 1925 where he acquired a degree in Islamic sciences. He wore a tarbush and European clothes and does not seem to have identified intellectually with the '*ulama*'.

Al-Sabi' gained journalistic experience during a brief sojourn in Latakia, Syria in 1929 where he published an anti-mandate paper. In Palestine he took up a career in teaching, journalism and youth work, based mostly in Jaffa. He went to Jordan after the 1948 war. There he edited a newspaper and endured tense relations with the Hashemite regime. He remained in Amman until his death in 1958.²⁷

Dr Salim Salamah

Dr Salamah was a Christian from Ramallah. He was born there in 1895 and went to Jerusalem for his education. After attending the city's primary and secondary schools, he studied at the Government Arab College and received a degree in education. He was strongly inclined towards languages and literature, but he next attended AUB, graduating with a degree in dentistry. He was a member of the Masonic lodge in Ramallah.

He went to Damascus in 1948 where he remained, writing and translating, until he returned to Ramallah in 1958. He died there in 1963.²⁸

Muhammad 'Ali al-Salih

Al-Salih was known as a nationalist poet and journalist. He was expelled from Transjordan because he edited a newspaper that took a decidedly anti-mandate stance.²⁹ By 1930 he had taken up residence in Haifa, working as a schoolteacher and continuing to write for the nationalist press. He founded the Istiqlal School in Haifa in 1931.³⁰

Ibrahim al-Shanti

Al-Shanti was born in Jaffa in 1910 to a notable Qalqilya family that had in recent generations moved to the port city. He received his primary education at Dar al-'Ulum and next studied at AUB, graduating in 1932 with a degree in political science. While at AUB, he was involved in the Arab cultural society al-'Urwah al-wuthqa.

He returned to Jaffa after his graduation and began working on the editorial staff of *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* with Sami al-Sarraj. In 1934 he established *al-Difa'* with al-Sarraj's help. He continued to publish the paper until he left Palestine in 1948.³¹

Mamduh al-Sukhn

Al-Sukhn was born in Nablus. He graduated from AUB and taught chemistry at al-Najah School. He was involved in the 1936–39 revolt and passed the war years in Iraq. Afterwards, he lived in Jordan.³²

Akram Zu'aytir

Zu'aytir was born in 1909 in Nablus, the youngest son of the city's mayor. He attended al-Najah School during 'Izzat Darwazah's directorship. At the age of 17 he began his studies at AUB where he joined the Arab cultural society al-'Urwah al-Wuthqa.³³

Zu'aytir returned to Palestine after one year because of health problems and began a career in teaching, journalism and political activism. He taught at Iraq's teachers' training college from 1933 to 1935. During this time he co-authored a nationalist history textbook with the Palestinian Darwish Miqdadi, which was the first of several books he wrote on history and politics.

He spent a year in prison for his activities during the general strike of 1936. After his release he escaped to Syria and was a leader of the revolt's leadership in exile. Until 1951 he lived as an exile and activist in Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Turkey.

He returned to Nablus after 14 years abroad and took a succession of high positions in the Jordanian government. These included ambassadorships to Syria, Iran and Afghanistan. In 1963 he was appointed foreign minister.³⁴

Notes

Introduction

1. Muslih 1991: 167.
2. Al-Azmeh 1995: 8.
3. See also Khalidi 1991: 1365–7.
4. Eikelman 1998: 124.
5. For the classic exposition of this style of politics, see Hourani 1993: 82–109.
6. Hobsbawm 1994: 76. On the question of the newness of Palestinian nationalism, see Gerber 2003: 25–6.
7. Mardin 2000: 396–7.
8. I rely heavily on their schema throughout this book (McAdam et al. 2001: 38–71).

1. Key Concepts and Historical Context

1. Hobsbawm 1990: 9–10, 80–100. For an extended discussion, see Giddens 1985.
2. Giddens 1985: 219.
3. Giddens 1985: 220.
4. Giddens 1985: 83–121.
5. Chambers 1964: 301–27.
6. Worringer 2004: 207–30.
7. Maoz 1968; Gerber 1985; Khairallah 1998: 79–95, especially 90–1; and Rogan 1998: 113–28.
8. Mardin 2000: 270–82, 287–332.
9. Karpas 2001: 172–82, 187–8; Deringil 1991: 345–59.
10. Kayali 1997: 31.
11. Kayali 1997: 32.
12. Akarli 1986: 74–89.
13. Makdisi 2002: 768–96.
14. Khalidi 1997: 67–88; Pappe 2004: 46–9.
15. Abu Manneh 1980: 287–304; Ayalon 2002: 17–40; Cioeta 1979: 167–86; Hourani 1983: 97, 99–102, 263–4.
16. Giddens 1985: 210–11; Habermas 1991.
17. Hourani 1983: 277; Philipp 1973: 3–22; Yapp 1987: 219–20.
18. Anderson 1991: 24, 26.

19. Commins 1990: 89–95; Hourani 1983: 136–41.
20. Kerr 1966: 103–52.
21. Hourani 1983: 156–8; Hroch (2000: 22–30); Cole and Kandiyoti 2002: 193–4.
22. Commins 1986: 405–25; see also Escovitz 1986: 293–310.
23. Commins 1990: 96, 135.
24. Hanioghlu 1991: 31–49.
25. Kayali 1997: 39.
26. Kayali 1997: 38–51, 82–96.
27. Khalidi 1981: 39, 48–50.
28. Kayali 1997: 100–8; Khalidi 1997: 80–4, 107–11, 119–44.
29. Tauber 1993: 121–71; Kayali 1997: 126–30.
30. Kayali 1997: 130–43; see also Karpas 2001: 368, 370.
31. Shaw and Shaw 1975: 305–10.
32. Kayali 1995: 265–86.
33. Tauber 1993: 90–1.
34. Tauber 1993: 287.
35. Khalidi 1981: 44.
36. Tauber 1993: 213–36.
37. Tauber 1993: 289–302.
38. Giddens 1985: 86.
39. Giddens 1985: 261.
40. Tilly 1992: 107–14.
41. Kennedy 1987: 137–8.
42. On when the Eastern Question began, see Brown 1984: 21–30.
43. Owen 1993: 122.
44. Giddens 1985: 4.
45. Giddens 1985: 261.
46. Kennedy 1987: 135.
47. Hurewitz 1956: 62, emphasis added.
48. Walters 1960: 7.
49. Wilson 1994: 26.
50. Wilson 1994: 27. For a similar assessment, see Louis 1984: 207. See also Cromer 1913: 3–53.
51. Wilson 1994: 26.
52. Walters 1960: 172–3.
53. Bentwich and Bentwich 1965: 145–6.
54. Perham 1965: xxxvi. Subsequent references to this work are from the first 1922 edition.
55. Mamdani (1996: 38–61) refer to this as ‘decentralized despotism’.
56. Callahan 1999: 72.
57. Callahan 1999: 70, 75.
58. Lugard 1922: 75.
59. Lugard 1922: 75.

60. Lugard 1922: 76.
61. Lugard 1922: 76
62. Lugard 1922: 77–8 (quoted passage 78) 203–5, 237.
63. Robinson (1976: 128–51) includes within this group white colonists, tribal chiefs, Tanzimat reformers and local merchants, among others..
64. Samuel 1965: 33–4. In the book that Samuel mentions, Lugard (1893: 649–52) briefly discusses the principles of indirect rule in Africa, drawing comparisons with administration in India and Burma.
65. Lugard 1922: 226–7. On notions of stages of historical development and their application to colonial rule in India, see Owen 1973: 223–43.
66. Owen 1965; Tignor 1963.
67. Bennett 1992: *passim*, especially 125, 151–5 and Appendix III, 366–67; Robinson 1976: 144–6; Shepherd 2000: 18.
68. Mansfield 1971: 176; Shepherd 2000: 30.
69. Shepherd 2000: 32–3, 66–7.
70. Bentwich and Bentwich 1965: 93–4.
71. Cannadine 2001: 41–6.
72. Cohn 1983: 165–210.
73. Cannadine 2001: 42.
74. Cannadine 2001: 67.
75. Macaulay 1972: 249.
76. Lugard 1922: 81.
77. Muslih 1988: 120–9, 132–52, 188–9; Gelvin 1998: 55–64; Tauber 1995: 15; Qasimiyah 1971: 67n2.
78. Tauber 1995: 50.
79. Dagher n. d.: 102–5; Darwazah 1992: 418–20; Gelvin 1998: 59–60; Muslih 1988: 132–3, 143.
80. Muslih 1988: 163–72.
81. Gelvin 1998: 59–60, 64–86; Muslih 1988: 146–51, 167–8, 188–200.
82. Gelvin 1998: 296.
83. Khalidi (1997: Chapter 7).
84. Massad 2001: 10–14.
85. Owen and Pamuk 1999: 62.
86. Biger 1994: 62–3.
87. Al-Tamimi and Bahjat 1987.
88. Cannadine 2001: 71–82.
89. Maloba 1993: 24–5.
90. Sachar 1996: 59–63.
91. Freund 1998: 102; Sachar 1996: 47–50.
92. Mosse 1978.
93. Shafir 1996: 8–12, 211–14.
94. Friesel 1993: 419–44.
95. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: 570–8; Metzger 1998: 185–6; Owen and Pamuk 1999: 59–61; Smith 1993: 9, 57.

96. Shepherd 2000: 70; Tripp 2000: 37.
97. Rogan 1996.
98. Halabi 2001.
99. Halabi 2001; Mattar 1988: 15–17.
100. Bennett 1992: 333–6.
101. Kedourie 1970: 58–69; Kupferschmidt 1987: 17–28.
102. Mattar 1988: 21–9.
103. Mattar 1988: 10–12.
104. Mattar 1988: 8–10.
105. Kupferschmidt 1987: 24–25; Mattar 1988: 26.
106. Kupferschmidt 1987: 19–20.
107. Mattar 1988: 27.
108. Shepherd 2000: 64–5. The 1931 census did include a question about ethnicity and included ‘Arab’ as a response. However, the analytical categories for census were otherwise expressed in terms of religious community (McCarthy 1990: 37).
109. Duara 1995: 22.
110. Bayly 2002: 158–203; Owen 1973: 236.
111. Kedourie 1970: 58–9; Porath 1974: 188.
112. Reiter 1996: 28–9.
113. Mattar 1988: 29–30.
114. Braude 1982: 68–88; Karpas 2001: 119, 126, 190, 310–11, 334–5, 474n30; Tsimhoni 1984: 166–92.
115. Kupferschmidt 1987: 2. Storrs (1945: 402) later referred to the SMC as ‘*Sir Herbert Samuel’s* Moslem “Supreme” Council’ (emphasis added).
116. Kupferschmidt 1987: 66–77.
117. Porath 1974: 208–40.
118. Porath 1974: 158–9.
119. Porath 1974: 108–10.
120. Porath 1974: 125–8.
121. Porath 1974: 241–3.
122. Cromer 1913: 27.
123. Porath 1974: 147–58.
124. Porath 1974: 244–7.
125. Porath 1974: 215–30.
126. For further elaboration, see Allina-Pisano 2003: 187–99.
127. Owen 1981: 175–9, 265.
128. This is exemplified in the career of Nicolas Sursuq of Beirut. See Fawaz 1983: 91–4; Oliphant 1881: 277–8.
129. An example is Ibrahim Samarah, ‘List of large estates in Palestine’, CZA Z4/771/1; Shim‘oni 1947: 233.
130. See the description of this phenomenon in early twentieth-century Nablus in al-Tamimi and Bahjat 1987: 131–3.
131. It can be calculated that of the 949,000 total dunums in the ‘estates’ over

- 5000 dunums identified in a 1919 Zionist document, 64.7 per cent were owned by residents of Egyptian or Levantine port cities ('List of large estates in Palestine', CZA Z4/771/1). See also Owen 1981: 264–5, 267–9.
132. Doumani 1995: 134–40, 155–81; Owen 1981: 264–70.
 133. Owen 1981: 177–8, 265, 271.
 134. We still await a thorough study of the Palestinian elite. The best survey is in al-Hut 1986: 645–710. The profile of the elite in the present book is based on her study unless otherwise indicated.
 135. Vashitz 1983: 98–120.
 136. al-Hut 1986: 658–60.
 137. Khalidi 1997: 151–3.
 138. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 148.
 139. Shepherd 2000: 36.
 140. Schick 1893: 22.
 141. al-Hut 1986: 658–9.
 142. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 148; Levine 2005: 51–89.
 143. Schölch 1982: 45–7.
 144. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 148.
 145. Doumani 1995: 1.
 146. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 148.
 147. al-Tamimi and Bahjat 1987: 130–5.
 148. Doumani 1995: 68–78. There was no rail link to Nablus until 1916 (Graham-Brown 1982: 111).
 149. al-Hut 1986: 670–7. On the Palestinian schools, see Khalidi 1997: 47–53.
 150. al-Hut 1986: 677–81.
 151. al-Hut 1986: 660–5.
 152. Porath 1974: 298–9.
 153. Fleischmann 2003: 30–1; Matthews forthcoming.
 154. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: II, 148–9.
 155. Graham-Brown 1982: 111–12.
 156. Bergheim 1894: 197–9; Doumani 1995: 134–51; Klein 1883: 45; Oliphant 1887: 193–4; Smith 1993: 40–1.
 157. Hoexter 1973: 249–311.
 158. Schilcher 1992: 229–58).
 159. Khalidi 1997: 158–9.
 160. Anderson 1991: 118.

2. The Nationalist Youth and Veteran Nationalists

1. Sherman 1997: 75–8, 253, 257.
2. Halevi 1983: 463, 465.
3. al-Hut 1986: 195–98; Porath 1974: 251–5.
4. H. M. Kalvarisky to the Palestine Zionist Executive, 'The Seventh Arab

- Congress' (undated), CZA, S2/5210.
5. I have borrowed this expression from Kenneth Pyle (1969).
 6. Bunton 1999; Shephard 2000: 74–6.
 7. Bentwich 1934: 139, emphasis added.
 8. Darwazah 1950: III, 91–2; Taqu 1977: 256.
 9. Taqu 1977: 251; see also Bernard Wasserstein 1991: 250.
 10. Taqu 1977: 252–63.
 11. Rosenthal 1986: 52.
 12. *Al-ʿArab*, 3 December 1932: 15; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 13 April 1930: 3.
 13. Tibawi 1956: 79–80, 133.
 14. Bowman 1942: 40–4.
 15. Cromer 1908: II, 534–5.
 16. Bowman 1942: 311.
 17. Bowman 1942: 311.
 18. Bowman 1942: 279.
 19. Bowman 1942: 308–9.
 20. Zuʿaytir 1994: 21.
 21. Tibawi 1956: 157, 270, 273.
 22. The number of pupils increased from 8248 to 36,005 (Tibawi 1956: 270).
 23. Tibawi 1956: 271.
 24. Tibawi 1956: 48–50, 65, 104.
 25. Tibawi 1956: 271.
 26. Strohmeier 1993: 222.
 27. *Al-Yarmuk*, 27 August 1925: 3; Strohmeier 1993: 227–9; Zuʿaytir 1994: 263.
 28. On Miqdadi see Hamadah 1991: 82–3; on Salim, al-Basha 1990: II, 41; and on al-Sulh and al-ʿUraysi see Strohmeier 1993: 228.
 29. Darwazah 1993: 211.
 30. Darwazah 1993: 239–41.
 31. Al-Nimr n.d.: 192–5; *al-Yarmuk*, 1 November 1926: 3; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 28 August 1930: 4.
 32. *Al-Hayat*, 20 August 1931: 3.
 33. *Al-Jazirah*, 24 June 1926: 1; see also Khillah 1982: 217.
 34. *Al-Yarmuk*, 7 December 1926: 3; see also *al-Jazirah*, 30 January 1927: 2.
 35. *Al-Hayat*, 6 August 1931: 3; Ormandag n.d.: 43. On al-Husri see Cleveland 1972.
 36. Zuʿaytir 1994: 379.
 37. Al-Sabiʿ 1951: 5–6.
 38. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 4 October 1930: 3.
 39. Schleifer 1979: 67, 67n33; *Filastin*, 7 October 1932: 2.
 40. Abu Hammad 1979: 484.
 41. Darwazah 1993: 242.
 42. *al-Yarmuk*, 22 September 1928: 3; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 7 July 1930: 3 and 18 August 1930: 2.

43. Gelvin 1998: 91–6.
44. Khuri 1993: 43; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 4 July 1928: 3.
45. 'Keith-Roach to Abu Muslih', 15 April 1925 and a profile of Abu Muslih, 27 February 1924, Hani Abu Musleh file, ISA, Department of Education, RG/8/1010M/294/EN.
46. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 23 November 1931: 1.
47. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 15 October 1933: 7.
48. *Al-Yarmuk*, 12 August 1927: 3.
49. Tibawi 1956: 197. This section is greatly influenced by Ernest Dawn's (1988) article 'The formation of pan-Arab ideology in the interwar years'.
50. Darwazah 1993: 144–7, 152–3.
51. Darwazah 1993: 191–4, 212–14, 272–3.
52. Darwazah 1993: 174–5.
53. Darwazah 1950: 106–7.
54. *Al-Fath*, 2, Rabi' al-Thani 1351: 9–10. The English and Arabic translation are produced together in the source.
55. *Al-Fath*, 28 March 1929: 3.
56. Al-Khatib 1925; Hurvitz 1993: 118–34.
57. Dawn 1988: 69; Tibawi 1956: 108.
58. Daghir 1918: 6–9, 13–14. Shakib Arslan expressed similar ideas in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 13 May 1929: 2.
59. Darwazah 1924: 3, 5.
60. *Al-Difa'*, 10 June 1934: 5.
61. Darwazah 1924: *passim*.
62. Darwazah 1929. See the ad in *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 March 1934: 3.
63. Darwazah 1931: 200 ff.
64. Darwazah 1931: 35.
65. Darwazah 1931: 39–40.
66. Kampfmeyer 1932: 103–10.
67. Mott 1984: ix.
68. Riggs 1928: 331–5; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 16 April 1928: 3.
69. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 March 1928: 3 and 2 April 1928: 2.
70. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 April 1928: 2.
71. *Sawt al-haqq*, 26 November 1928: 4.
72. *Al-Fath*, 20 December 1928: 12–13, 7 February 1929: 9–10, 14 February 1929: 9–10.
73. *Al-Yarmuk*, 8 June 1928: 3; *Sawt al-haqq*, 29 October 1928: 3 and 17 December 1928: 4; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 24 April 1928: 2; Zu'aytir 1994: 25.
74. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 10 May 1928: 3; *al-Yarmuk*, 22 June 1928: 3.
75. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 May 1928: 2.
76. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 4 May 1928: 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 11 July 1929: 3.

77. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 19 November 1928: 2.
78. Hamdi Husaini file, ISA, Education Department, RG 8, M/1010/1A/147/2; al-Hut 1986: 56; Shubayb 1981: 60; Sidqi 2001: 89.
79. *Al-Yarmuk*, 2 March 1927: 2, 3 and 31 March 1927: 1.
80. *Al-Jazirah*, 9 June 1927: 1.
81. *Sawt al-haqq*, 5 November 1928: 4.
82. Hen-Tov 1974: 49, 98; *Oriente Moderno* 1927: 213.
83. List 1965: 85.
84. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 June 1928: 2–3.
85. Al-Husayni n.d.; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 February 1930: 2 and 24 February 1930: 2.
86. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 25 July 1929: 3.
87. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 May 1928: 2, 17 September 1928: 3 and 19 March 1928: 2; al-Sabi' 1951: 15; *Sawt al-haqq*, 5 November 1928: 4 and 10 December 1928: 4. Al-Dajani was a member of the Gaza YMMA.
88. *Sawt al-haqq*, 29 October 1928; *Sawt al-haqq*, 4 December 1928: 2.
89. *Sawt al-haqq*, 29 October 1928: 3 and 5 November 1928: 4.
90. *Sawt al-haqq*, 17 December 1928: 1.
91. *Sawt al-haqq*, 29 October 1928: 3.
92. Al-Hut 1986: 196.
93. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 17 September 1928: 3.
94. Lockman 1996: 145–6; Mohamedan Society of Haifa to High Commissioner, 12 March 1929, ISA, M294/K/186/31; *al-Yarmuk*, 29 September 1928: 3.
95. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 November 1928: 4.
96. *Sawt al-haqq*, 26 November 1928: 4.
97. *Al-Iqdam*, 2 January 1930: 5.
98. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 13 May 1929: 2.
99. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 May 1929: 1 and 11 April 1929: 4; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 4 August 1930: 2.
100. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 13 May 1929: 2, 30 May 1929: 1 and 22 July 1929: 1; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 June 1929: 4.
101. Shubayb 1981: 59; Sidqi 2001: 89–90. Details of Sidqi's account are wrong.
102. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 25 April 1929: 3.
103. Abu Hashhash 1990: 24; Sidqi 2001: 85–6.
104. *Al-Yarmuk*, 4 June 1925: 2.
105. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 7 February 1927: 5.
106. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 October 1928: 2.
107. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 20 February 1929: 2.
108. *Oriente Moderno* 1929: 265–6 citing *Filastin*, 9 May 1929.
109. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 6 May 1929: 2, emphasis added.
110. *The Times*, 29 July 1929: 13.
111. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 25 July 1929: 3.
112. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim* 15 August 1929: 4.

113. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 18 July 1929: 1.
114. *Al-ʿAwdat* 1987: 330. On *al-Urwah al-Wuthqa* see *al-Kulliyah*, 19, 1932: 18, 143–5, 151.
115. *Al-Ittihad al-ʿarabi*, 11 September 1926: 2; *al-Jazirah*, 15 April 1926: 3 and 9 September 1926: 4.
116. *Al-Yarmuk*, 30 August 1925: 3.
117. *Solh* 1988: 154–5.
118. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 5 May 1933: 4 and 29 October 1931: 3; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 4 May 1933: 7.
119. *Davar*, 22 August 1929: 2. Assaf, editor of *Davar's* Arab affairs section, was born in Poland and studied at the Seminary for Oriental Science in Berlin (Cornfeld 1947: 14).
120. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 19 August 1929: 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 15 August 1929: 2.
121. *Davar*, 14 August 1929: 1.
122. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 2.
123. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 2.
124. *Davar*, 15 August 1929: 1; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 2.
125. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 2.
126. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 2.
127. Great Britain 1930a: 306; cf. Wasserstein 1991: 228–9.
128. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 August 1929: 3.
129. For studies of the riots, see Kolinsky 1993: 33–56; Segev 1999: 295–327; Mattar 1988: 33–49; and Porath 1974: 258–73.
130. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 October 1929: 2.
131. *Al-Yarmuk*, 15 October 1929: 2.
132. *Al-Yarmuk*, 18 October 1929: 2.
133. Tibawi 1956: 28–9.
134. Quoted in Shepherd 2000: 159.
135. *Al-Yarmuk*, 20 October 1929: 2.
136. *Al-Yarmuk*, 24 October 1929: 2; ISA, RG 65/P985/73.
137. *Al-Yarmuk*, 22 October 1929: 1; Zuʿaytir 1994: 54.
138. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 13 October 1929: 2.
139. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 25 November 1929: 3.
140. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 24 November 1929: 3 and 25 November 1929: 3; Zuʿaytir 1994: 71.
141. Hen-Tov 1974: 136, 146, citing *Imprecorr*, 9, 27 September 1929: 1161–3. See also *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 5 January 1930: 3 and 9 December 1929: 3.
142. Great Britain 1930a: 188–9; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 14 November 1929: 2.
143. *Al-Yarmuk*, 24 November 1929: 1; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 20 November 1929: 1.
144. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 November 1929: 1.
145. The paper's owner was Sheikh ʿAbdullah al-Qalqili, born in 1899 (*al-ʿAwdat* 1987: 517–18).

146. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 28 December 1929: 1.
147. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 29 December 1929: 1, 3, 4 and 2 June 1930: 3.
148. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 June 1930: 2.
149. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 June 1930: 2.
150. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 18 September 1930: 3 and 22 September 1930: 2; *al-Yarmuk*, 14 July 1930: 2.
151. Al-Hut 1986: 190.
152. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 30 April 1930: 3 and 4 May 1930: 2.
153. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 10 July 1930: 2.
154. *Al-Yarmuk*, 20 July 1930: 1.
155. See Zu'aytir 1994: 7–18, 26–9, 33–6, 64–7, 122; Akram Zu'aytir 'memorandum, 23 October 1929, Akram Zu'aytir personnel file, ISA, Department of Education, M/1012/805/1.
156. Zu'aytir 1994: 104. For a list of some of his articles and those of his colleagues, see Shumali 1992: 118–26.
157. Fischer 1982: 95–100.
158. Zu'aytir 1994: 109, 112–15.
159. Zu'aytir 1994: 116–17.
160. Zu'aytir 1994: 129, 136, 138.
161. Deputy District Commissioner, Jerusalem Division to Acting Chief Secretary, 9 March 1930, in 'Meraat el Shark', ISA, Chief Secretary files, RG:2/K6/K17/31.
162. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 April 1930: 3; Zu'aytir 1994: 139.
163. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 April 1930: 3; Zu'aytir 1994: 139–49.
164. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 28 April 1930: 3 and 17 April 1930: 3.
165. Ruhi 'Abd al-Hadi, Acting Chief Secretary, to the Deputy District Commissioner, Jerusalem Division, [no day] May 1930, 'Meraat el Shark', ISA, Chief Secretary files, RG 2/K6/K17/31.
166. Zu'aytir 1994: 161.
167. Zu'aytir 1994: 194–9.
168. Zu'aytir 1994: 199.
169. One of these, Abu Ghazalah, can be identified as a later member of the Istiqlal Party (Zu'aytir 1994: 216–17).
170. Zu'aytir 1994: 190; *al-Yarmuk*, 10 September 1930: 2 citing *al-Shura*.
171. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 13 August 1930: 1; *al-Yarmuk*, 11 September 1930.
172. Anderson 1991: 116.

3. The Arab Unity Scheme and the Beginnings of Popular Mobilization

1. This experience was not unique to Ottoman Arabs. See Anderson 1991: 3–59, 114–15.
2. Al-Madi and Musa 1959: 245–8; Maan 1989: 103.

3. On Talia^c see al-Basha 1990: II, 109–12; on Arslan see al-Basha 1990: I, 151–3; on ‘Abd al-Baqi see *Shakhsyat filastiniyah hata ‘amm* 1945 1979: 91–3; on ‘Adil al-‘Azmah see Al Jundi 1960b: 540 and Darwazah 1992: I, 204–5; on Nabih al-‘Azmah see Al Jundi 1960b: 531 and Darwazah 1992: I, 206; on al-Sarraj see Al Jundi 1960b: 363–4; on al-Zirikli see Farhud 1994: 283; and on al-Hakim see Al Jundi 1960a: 163–4.
4. Ma‘an 1989: 135–6, 143.
5. Porath 1974: 116.
6. Daghir n.d.: I, 152–3.
7. al-Hut 1986: 854–5; Mouton 1979.
8. Mouton 1979: 324–5.
9. On Arslan’s life, see Cleveland 1985.
10. Al-Hut 1986: 855.
11. Yitzhaqi 1954: 280–1.
12. Hourani 1983: 224–7.
13. Khoury 1987: 221–40.
14. In preparation for his legal studies, Daghir’s father had sent him to study *fiqh* with a *salafi* shaykh, who also taught him about Arab history. Daghir had also been a schoolmate and childhood friend of Riyad al-Sulh (Daghir n.d.: 21, 24, 30, 32, 35–6, 74–6, 102, 105, 107, 150, 155).
15. Beauplan 1929: 89–96; Mouton 1979: 316.
16. Cleveland 1985: 178n19; Syro-Palestinian Congress 1923: 1–3.
17. Khoury 1987: 151–204. A number of Druze commanders had received military training at the Ottoman military academy (Provence 2005: 38–42).
18. *Al-Yarmuk*, 29 October 1925: 2 and 13 December 1925: 2; al-Hut 1986: 213; and ‘Collections made in Iraq by Palestine delegation of Committee of Syrian Sufferers’, 28 April 1927, FO 371/12303/E1952.
19. *Al-Jazirah*, 10 September 1927: 1; Shahbandar 1933: 112; *al-Yarmuk*, 19 November 1925: 2, 26 November 1925: 2, 28 June 1927: 3, 6 September 1927: 2.
20. Darwazah 1992: I, 620–31, 788; *al-Ittihad al-‘arabi*, 28 November 1925: 3.
21. Khoury 1987: 236; *al-Yarmuk*, 10 December 1925: 3 and 31 January 1926: 2.
22. Shahbandar 1933: 112; *al-Yarmuk*, 22 January 1927: 2.
23. See ‘Expulsion of Syrians from Palestine’ (enclosure dated 8 July 1927), 28 July 1927, FO 371/12303/E221; *al-Jami‘ah al-‘arabiyah*, 28 June 1927: 3 and 30 June 1927: 1; *al-Yarmuk*, 21 June 1927: 1.
24. Arslan 1937: 467–8n2; *al-Yarmuk*, 19 July 1927: 1, 3, 15 November 1927: 3 and 30 December 1927: 1; *al-Jami‘ah al-‘arabiyah*, 15 August 1927: 1, 4 and September 1927: 1–3; Shukri al-Quwwatli to ‘Awni ‘Abd al-Hadi, 5 November, ISA, RG 66, ‘Awni ‘Abd al-Hadi papers, Box 152.
25. Beauplan 1929: 80–2.

26. Arslan 1937: 467n1, 474–5.
27. Arslan 1937: 493–5, 503; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 September 1927: 3; *al-Yarmuk*, 18 October 1927: 1, 4.
28. *Al-Yarmuk*, 20 January 1928: 1 and 3 March 1928: 3.
29. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 February 1928: 3.
30. Khoury 1987: 246–9.
31. Khoury 1987: 357.
32. Cleveland 1985: 65.
33. Arslan 1937: 533; Qawuqji 1975: 12–13.
34. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 18 September 1930: 1, 4).
35. Gad's intelligence, 22 June 1932, CZA S25/4143. 'Gad' was a pseudonym of Taysir Dawji, a young Druze from Damascus, who worked as a journalist in Palestine and was close to the Istiqlalists. See also *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 14 January 1931: 4; Khayriyah Qasimiyah 1991: 44–45, 47–50; al-Qawuqji 1975: 120–38; *al-Yarmuk*, 18 September 1930: 3 and 2 October 1930: 1.
36. Husry 1975: 325–7, 329–31; Masalha 1991; Khoury 1987: 337–40, 351–4.
37. Arslan 1937: 441n1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 5 October 1930: 3 and 17 April 1931: 1, 4.
38. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 February 1931: 2, 16 February 1931: 1, 27 February 1931: 1 and 5 March 1931: 1.
39. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 2 June 1930: 2. See also *al-Yarmuk*, 12 November 1929: 1 and 13 November 1929 1; *Maktab al-isti'amat al-suri* (The Syrian Information Office) 18, 9 November 1929, ISA Arab Executive Papers, RG 65/2/p/p985/72.
40. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 March 1931: 1 and 22 March 1931: 2; *al-Yarmuk*, 30 November 1930: 4.
41. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 April 1931: 2 and 28 March 1931: 1.
42. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 April 1931: 1, 2 April 1931: 1 and 12 April 1931: 1.
43. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 17 April 1931: 1 and 19 April 1931: 1.
44. 'The Pan Islamic Arab Revolutionary Movement', CID, 21 May 1931, CO 733/204/871/156/1.
45. Stein 1984a: 88–118.
46. Al-Kayyali 1988: 191–228.
47. Rose 1973: 16–28.
48. Laqueur and Rubin 2001: 36–41.
49. Kayyali 1988: 228–31.
50. Zu'aytir 1994: 165.
51. Cleveland 1985: 60–1; *al-Jazirah*, 8 February 1926: 1; al-Tahir 1932: 101; Zu'aytir 1994: 17–18, 26–28, 112.
52. Zu'aytir 1994: 259 and 1979: appendix.
53. Zu'aytir 1994: 241–3.
54. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 22 February 1931: 3; Zu'aytir 1994: 244–5.
55. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 March 1931: 3.

56. Zu'aytir 1994: 249–50.
57. Preparatory Committee to 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, 3 March 1931, ISA, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi papers, RG 66, 413/3874; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 4 March 1931: 3.
58. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 March 1931: 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 March 1931: 2.
59. Zu'aytir 1994: 250–3.
60. Zu'aytir 1994: 288.
61. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 19 April 1931: 3; see also 20 April 1931: 1.
62. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 15 January 1931: 2.
63. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 22 January 1931: 1, 2.
64. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 5 February 1931: 3.
65. 'Adil Jabr had established the paper about a year before and it was considered pro-Majlisi (*al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 16 February 1931: 4).
66. *Maktab al-istal'amat al-suri* 315, 8 March 1930: 1, in ISA, Arab Executive papers, RG 65/2, p/985/72.
67. Zu'aytir 1994: 266, 268.
68. *Al-Hayat*, 3 June 1931: 1.
69. *Oriente Moderno*, 11, 1931: 300; Intelligence from 'Ayn, 4 September 1931, CZA S25/3557. This Arab informant to the Jewish agency is identified in his reports by the series of Hebrew letters 'ayn, vav-yud, hay. For simplicity, I refer to him as "Ayn".
70. *Al-'Awdat* 1987: 419–27.
71. *Al-Hut* 1986: 235–6.
72. Criticism of the Arab Executive was rife at this time (*al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 14 May 1931: 1; Zu'aytir 1994: 282).
73. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 4 June 1931: 1.
74. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 June 1931: 1. See also, *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 June 1931, quoted in *al-Muhafizah* 1989: 213.
75. *Al-Hayat*, 19 June 1931: 1.
76. *Al-Hayat*, 12 July 1931: 1.
77. *Al-Hayat*, 21 June 1931: 2 and 23 June: 1; Gelvin 1998: 148.
78. See especially 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi's article in *al-Hayat*, 29 June 1931: 1.
79. Kolinsky 1993: 113.
80. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 June 1931: 3.
81. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 3 July 1931: 1, 4.
82. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 13 July 1931: 3.
83. *Al-Hayat*, 14 July 1931: 3 and 16 July 1931: 1.
84. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 2 August 1931: 1–2.
85. Zu'aytir 1994: 307.
86. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 29 December 1930: 3; *al-Hayat*, 2 August 1931: 3.
87. Report on the Nablus meeting, CZA S 25/4108.
88. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 July 1931: 3 and 29 July 1931: 2; Report on the Nablus meeting, CZA S 25/4108.

89. *Al-Hayat*, 2 August 1931: 1.
90. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 2 August 1931: 1.
91. *Al-Hayat*, 5 August 1931: 1.
92. Kolinsky 1993: 114–15.
93. *Al-Hayat*, 6 August 1931: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 August 1931: 3.
94. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 August 1931: 3.
95. *Al-Hayat*, 18 August 1931: 4.
96. Intelligence, 18 August 1931, CZA S 25/3557.
97. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 August 1931: 3.
98. *Al-Hayat*, 20 August 1931: 1.
99. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 25 August 1931: 3; Intelligence of the Joint Bureau, 24 August 1931: CZA S25/3557.
100. CZA S25/ 3557.
101. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 25 August 1931: 1. Zionist intelligence put the number of demonstrators wounded at seven and claimed that a woman struck a policeman a 'murderous blow'. This was presumably a figure of speech. Intelligence from the Joint Bureau, 24 August 1931, CZA S25/ 3557.
102. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 August 1931: 3; *al-Hayat*, 27 August 1931: 1.
103. *Al-Hayat*, 27 August 1931: 1; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 23 July 1931: 2.
104. *Al-Hayat*, 4 September 1931: 1.
105. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 7 September 1931: 2; Zu'aytir 1994: 342–9; 'Abd al-Hadi to al-Zirikli [undated], 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi papers, ISA, RG 66, Box 413/3874.
106. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 September 1931: 3, 30 September 1931: 3.
107. Report on Arab incitement, 3 September 1931, CO 733/ 204.
108. R. A. Furness, 'Report on the control of the press in Palestine', 16 June 1931, CO 733/201/7.
109. O. G. R. Williams of the Colonial Office to the Treasury, 14 September 1931; minute by O. G. R. Williams, 2 October 1931; Treasury official [signature illegible] to Cunliffe-Lister, 14 October 1931; O. G. R. Williams to R. S. Furness, 9 December 1931, CO 733/201/7.
110. Habermas 1991: 29.
111. The Joint Bureau's intelligence, 16 September 1931, CZA S25/3557.
112. CID, 20 October 1931, FO 371/15333/E5246; *Mir'at al-Sharq*, 23 September 1931: 1, 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 November 1931: 4.
113. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 24 September 1931: 4.
114. Zu'aytir 1994: 361.
115. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 October 1931: 1.
116. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 30 September 1931: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 October 1931: 1.
117. Arslan's letter to Rashid Rida of 23 July 1931 in al-Sharabasi 1963: 767.
118. Arslan's letter to Rida of 17 Rabi' al-Thani 1350 in al-Sharabasi 1963: 785–7.

119. Intelligence, 9 October, 1 November 1931, CZA, S25/3557; Arab Office Intelligence [undated, apparently early November 1931] CZA S25/3557; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 27 September 1931: 1.
120. Arlosoroff diary notes, 5 October 1931, CZA, Z4/3663/III, 106.
121. See Shukri Qatinah accuse the Arab Executive for having lost the trust of the 'Palestinian nation' (*al-ummah al-filastiniyah*) in *al-Iqdam*, 10 November 1929: 1–2. Qatinah, from Nazareth, was a youth organizer and an associate of Hamdi al-Husayni. He served as a Jerusalem correspondent for the pan-Arabist paper *al-Difa'*, joined the Muslim Brethren and was killed in the 1948 war (Al-Sabi' 1951: 68).
122. Al-Muhafizah 1989: 299–300, quoting al-Sabi's article in *Filastin*, 25 August 1932.

4. An Islamic Congress, an Arab Congress and the Istiqlal Party

1. Makdisi 2000: 7.
2. Makdisi 2000: 6–7.
3. Makdisi 2000: 10–11.
4. Makdisi (2000: 7–8) asserts, the pre-colonial period was 'before the age of Ottoman reform' and the post-colonial was 'during and after the age of reform', when was the colonial era?
5. Pandey 1990: 6.
6. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 2 January 1931: 3 and 11 January 1931: 3.
7. His career is detailed in Iqbal 1977.
8. Chawla 1981: 35.
9. Chawla 1981: 35.
10. Ovadia's report, 25 January 1931, CZA S25/3557.
11. 'Moslem agitation and Western or Wailing Wall' [n.d.], CZA S25/2975.
12. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 20 November 1931: 1.
13. Segev 1999: 346–7; Shepherd 2000: 182–4.
14. Shepherd 2000: 184–5. See also Segev 1999: 381–2.
15. Shepherd 2000: 184.
16. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister (telegram), 20 November 1931, FO371/15283; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, paraphrase of a telegram, 25 November 1931, FO371/15283.
17. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister (telegram), 20 November 1931, FO371/15283.
18. Paraphrase of a telegram, Cunliffe-Lister to Wauchope, 30 November 1931, FO371/15283; Kramer 1986: 125–6.
19. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 27 July 1931: 2.
20. 'Confidential', Percy Lorraine to Sir John Simon, 27 November 1931, FO371/15283; Mayer 1982; CZA, Z4/3663 III, 141.
21. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 November 1931: 1 and 19 October 1931: 3; *al-Hilal*, 40 (January 1932): 249; *al-Fath*, 24 Jamadi al-Akhirah 1350: 1 and 2; al-Tha'alabi 1988: 217–26; Kramer 1986: 128–31.

22. Al-Tha'alabi 1988: 68–74.
23. Al-Tha'alabi 1988: 74–9.
24. Al-Tha'alabi 1988: 80–9.
25. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 16 February 1931: 2.
26. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 28 May 1931: 1, citing the magazine *Muslim Outlook*.
27. Pandey 1990: 243–4.
28. Reprinted in *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 8 December 1931: 3.
29. Solh 1988: 154n19, indicating one nationalist's communication with Gandhi in 1931.
30. *Al-Yarmuk*, 22 November 1929, 11 June 1930: 3, 11 July 1930: 3, 13 July 1930: 1, 27 June 1930: 1, 8 June 1930: 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 20 August 1931: 1.
31. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 10 September 1931: 1, 4 and 18 December 1931: 3; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 21 December 1931: 4.
32. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 22 October 1931: 3.
33. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 26 October 1931: 1.
34. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 29 October 1931: 1.
35. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 November 1931: 1.
36. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 9 November 1931: 1, 4.
37. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 16 November 1931: 1.
38. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 November 1931: 3 and 12 November 1931: 1.
39. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 8 December 1931: 3, 26 November 1931: 4, 26 November 1931: 3, 8 December 1931: 3.
40. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 16 November 1931: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 November 1931: 3.
41. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 4 December 1931: 1.
42. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 November 1931: 1 and 5 November 1931: 1.
43. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 16 November 1931: 3.
44. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 19 November 1931: 1.
45. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 November 1931: 3.
46. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 30 November 1931: 2; Khoury 1987: 360–5.
47. Secret memorandum, 28 November 1931, CZA, S25/3557.
48. *La Nation arabe*, 8–9 (1931): 6, 7–13.
49. Al-Hut 1986: 871–3.
50. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 7 December 1931: 1 and 13 December 1931: 1; Khoury 1987: 363–4.
51. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 December 1931: 2.
52. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 30 December 1931: 1 and 23 December 1931: 1.
53. Al-Tahir 1932: 190, 203–4.
54. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 13 December 1931: 3, 14 December 1931: 2, 3.
55. Al-Tahir 1932: 208.
56. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 14 December 1931: 3.
57. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 8 December 1931: 1.

58. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 10 December 1931: 2 and 14 December 1931: 3.
59. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 10 December 1931: 1.
60. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 14 December 1931: 1.
61. Zu'aytir 1994: 366–7.
62. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 December 1931: 2.
63. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 20 December 1931: 2.
64. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 21 December 1931: 2; *al-'Arab*, 17 September 1932, 15.
65. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 21 December 1931: 1.
66. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 December 1931: 3 and 16 December 1931: 3.
67. Intelligence report, 22 December 1931, CZA, S25/3557.
68. Darwazah 1950: III, 87; *al-Fath*, 282, 14 Sha'ban 1350: 10.
69. Darwazah 1950: 306–8; 'Ayn's intelligence, 13 June 1932, CZA S25/3557.
70. 'Ayn's intelligence, 27 January 1932, CZA S25/3557.
71. Intelligence report, 25 December 1931, CZA S25/3557; 'Ayn's intelligence from a meeting on 21 March 1932, CZA, S25/3557.
72. 'Ayn's intelligence, 27 January 1932, CZA S25/3557; *Filastin*, 26 January 1932: 7.
73. *Filastin*, 24 January 1932: 4.
74. Arslan 1937: 634–7.
75. 'Ayn's intelligence, 27 January 1932, CZA S25/3557.
76. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 30 December 1931: 1.
77. Zu'aytir 1994: 378–9.
78. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 31 December 1931: 1.
79. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 10 January 1932: 1. News from the Congress of Arab Youth [n.d.] CZA S25/3457; *Filastin*, 6 January 1932: 3, 8 and 5 January 1932: 1, 5, 8.
80. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 7 January 1932: 2; News from the Congress of Youth, n.d., CZA S25/3457.
81. *Filastin*, 7 January 1932: 5, 6, 8; News from the Congress of Youth, n.d., CZA S25/3457.
82. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 14 January 1932: 1, 4.
83. Zu'aytir 1994: 379.
84. Porath 1977: 122.
85. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 March 1932: 3, 24 March 1932: 3, 27 March 1932: 3; *Filastin*, 6 April 1932: 5; al-Hut 1986: 876.
86. Zu'aytir 1994: 385.
87. Zu'aytir 1994: 381–3, 389.
88. *Filastin*, 9 April 1932: 4.
89. *Filastin*, 7 April 1932: 6.
90. *Filastin*, 10 April 1932: 7.
91. Qasimiyah 1991: 61.
92. Zu'aytir 1994: 385–6.

93. 'Ayn's intelligence, 22 February 1932, CZA 25/3557.
94. Arlosoroff's diary notes, 12 February 1932, CZA Z4/3663/III, 310–11. On Shertok, who later Hebraized his name to Sharett, see Sheffer 1996: 6–28.
95. Arlosoroff's diary notes, 12 February 1932, CZA Z4/3663/III, 310–11.
96. Zu'aytir 1994: 402.
97. Marr 1985: 50–4, 65.
98. Marr 1985: 50.
99. Arslan 1937: 642–3. See also Filastin, 28 February 1932: 7.
100. Arslan 1937: 647–9, 651.
101. Arslan 1937: 650–1, 654.
102. Darwazah 1950: III, 88.
103. Arslan 1937: 651–2, 655; conversation with 'Ayn, 24 April 1932, CZA S25/3557; conversation with T. D., 4 April 1932, S25/4122; Gad's intelligence, 16 June 1932, CZA S25/4143.
104. Arslan 1937: 654–5.
105. The article was reprinted in *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 4 May 1932: 2.
106. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 27 July 1932: 1.
107. 'Ayn's intelligence, 24 June 1932, CZA, S25/3557 and 1 July 1932, CZA, S25/3557; Gad's News, 29 June 1932, CZA, S25/4122; Arslan 1937: 665, 671.
108. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 June 1932: 1, 3 and 26 June 1932: 2; Zu'aytir 1994: 408–9.
109. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 3 July 1932: 1.
110. Gad's intelligence, 4 May 1932, CZA, S25/4122.
111. 'Ayn's intelligence, 13 June 1932, 17 June 1932 and 4 July 1932, CZA S25/3557; Qasimiyah 1991: 61.
112. 'Ayn's intelligence, 19 July 1932, CZA S25/3557.
113. Zu'aytir 1994: 406.
114. Al-Hut 1986: 270. See also Darwazah 1992: I, 804–6.
115. Wauchope to Culiffe-Lister, 30 January 1932, CO733/222/7.
116. Khillah 1982: 510; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 9 July 1932, weekly appreciation summary, 8 June 1932, CO733/222/8.
117. *Filastin*, 7 October 1933: 4.
118. Wauchope to Culiffe-Lister, 30 January 1932, CO733/222/7.
119. Notes from an interview on 2 January 1932, CO733/222/7.
120. Memorandum by H. F. Downie, 9 April 1932 and memorandum on the Supreme Moslem Council, 18 May 1932, CO733/222/7.
121. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 30 January 1932, CO733/222/7.
122. Record of an interview with Rutenberg by Cunliffe-Lister, 16 April 1932, Parkinson to Wauchope, 18 May 1932, CO733/222/7.
123. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 12 March 1932, Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 7 May 1932, CO733/222/7.
124. 'Memorandum: Palestine Supreme Moslem Council'.

125. 'Memorandum: Palestine Supreme Moslem Council'; Downie to Burke and Parkinson, 30 November 1932, CO733/222/9.
126. Extract from the weekly appreciation summary, 17 June 1932, extract from a semi-official letter from Wauchope to Parkinson, 23 July 1932, extract of a private and a personal letter from Wauchope to Parkinson, 19 August 1932, extract from notes of an interview between Amin al-Husayni and Wauchope, 1 October 1932, CO733/222/8; 'Ayn's intelligence, 9 June 1932, CZA S25/3557; Gad's intelligence, 29 May 1932, CZA, S25/4122; 'Ayn's News, 24 June 1932, CZA, S25/3557.
127. Extract of weekly appreciation summary, 8 June 1932, CO733/222/8.
128. Raghib al-Nashashibi to Wauchope, 27 June 1932, 'Confidential', Wauchope to al-Nashashibi, 2 July 1932, Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 9 July 1932, CO733/222/8.
129. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 9 July 1932, CO733/222/8.
130. Memorandum by H. F. Downie, 29 September 1932, CO733/213/8; Kupferschmidt 1987: 168–86.
131. Memorandum on the finances of the Supreme Muslim Council, 8 March 1932, CO733/213/7; Amin al-Husayni to Wauchope, 25 May 1932, CO733/213/8.
132. Officer Administering Government (OAG) Young to Cunliffe-Lister, 27 October 1932, CO733/213/9.
133. Acting Chief Secretary Moody to Amin al-Husayni, 19 October 1932, included as enclosure I with letter from Young to Cunliffe-Lister, 27 October 1932, 733/213/9; memorandum by H. F. Downie, 29 September 1932, CO733/213/8; Cunliffe-Lister to Wauchope, 30 January 1933, CO733/222/9.
134. Memorandum by H. F. Downie, 29 September 1932, CO733/213/8.
135. Memorandum on the Supreme Moslem Council, 18 May 1932, CO733/222/7.
136. Kupferschmidt 1987: 53.
137. OAG Young to Cunliffe-Lister, 27 October 1932, CO733/213/9.
138. Wauchope to Parkinson, 19 August 1932, CO733/222/8.
139. 'Ayn's intelligence, n.d., CZA, S25/3557.
140. Abrahamian 1982: 117–18, 180, 193, 200; 'Ayn's intelligence, 30 May 1932, CZA S25/3557 and 18 January 1932, CZA S25/3557; Arlsan 1937: 640–2, 649.
141. Al-Tha'alabi 1988: 307–8.
142. Tha'alabi 1988: 295–7.
143. Conversation with Taysir Dawji, n.d, CZA, S25/4122; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 24 February 1932: 1.
144. Conversation with Taysir Dawji, 11 April 1932, CZA, S25/4122.
145. Aziz 1963: 114.
146. Pandey 1990: 250–4.

5. Creating and Regulating the Palestinian Public Sphere

1. 'Mandate statistics: migration' in McCarthy 1990: 171.
2. Eley 1996: 291, 297, 305.
3. The declaration was signed by 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi, Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, Mu'in al-Madi, 'Izzat Darwazah, Subhi al-Khadra', Dr Salim Salamah, Fahmi al-'Abbushi, Akram Zu'aytir and 'Ajaj Nuwayhid. *Filastin*, 4 August 1932 (press clipping) in Arab Congress file, George Antonius Papers, ISA, RG 65, P/330/862.
4. *Filastin*, 7 August 1932: 5 and 10 August 1932: 5.
5. Darwazah 1950: III, 104.
6. Zu'aytir 1994: 415.
7. Darwazah 1950: III, 103–4; Darwazah 1992: 822; al-Hut 1986: 271.
8. al-Hut 1986: 272. This is considered in detail in Chapter 7.
9. *Filastin*, 15 December 1932: 8; CID, 28 January 1933, FO 371/16926.
10. *Al-'Arab*, 19 November 1932: 3, 3 September 1933: 11 and 27 May 1933: 6, 20.
11. 'Hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi fi Filastin: bayanuhu wa qanunuhu' (The Arab Istiqlal Party in Palestine: its declaration and bylaw) (Jerusalem: Matba'at al-'Arab: 1932), in 'Arab Congress' file, George Antonius Papers, ISA, RG 65, p/330/862. Information on the party membership in this chapter is taken from appendices I and II of the present book and from the sources cited there.
12. *Al-'Arab*, 1 October 1932: 1 and 7 January 1933: 2.
13. 'Hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi fi Filastin: bayanuhu wa qanunuhu'.
14. *Al-'Arab*, 3 September 1932: 1.
15. *Al-'Arab*, 12 November 1932: 1 and 29 April 1933: 1.
16. 'Hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi fi Filastin: bayanuhu wa qanunuhu'.
17. *Filastin*, 21 June 1933 (misdated press clipping, apparently from 21 April), Tadhir file, ISA, p/359/2048.
18. Al-Husayni n.d.
19. Ayalon 1987: 49–50; Zolondek 1965.
20. Al-Husayni n.d.: 2, 3.
21. *Filastin*, 25 October 1932: 2.
22. *Filastin*, 25 October 1932: 2. On Mary Shahadah, see Fleischmann 2003: 67, 71, 75, 80, 88, 148, 157, 214–15.
23. 'Hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi fi-Filastin: bayanuhu wa-qanunuhu'.
24. 'Hizb al-istiqlal al-'arabi fi-Filastin: bayanuhu wa-qanunuhu'.
25. *Filastin*, 16 August 1932: 5.
26. Information in this section on the party's membership is taken from Appendix 2 and the sources cited therein.
27. Antonius 1965.
28. *Al-'Arab*, 3 September 1932, 10 September 1932: 7, 22 October 1932: 6.
29. *Al-'Arab*, 10 September 1932: 10, 11, 12.
30. *Al-Sirat-mustaqim*, 26 September 1932: 3.

31. Ayalon 1987: 48–9.
32. Mardin 2000: 273–74; Karpat 2001: 119–24, 316.
33. Kayali 1997: 179.
34. Al-ʿAwdat (1987: 213) gives 1932 as the publication date. This was probably the first edition; I have had access to the third (Darwazah 1938).
35. Darwazah 1938: 166–8, 171.
36. Ayalon 1987: 74; Zolondek 1967: 207–8.
37. Shubayb 1981: 83; Gad’s intelligence, 19–22 January 1933, CZA, S25/4143.
38. *Filastin*, 13 December 1932: 8, 10 August 1932: 5; Zuʿaytir 1994: 483–4.
39. *Al-ʿArab*, 27 August 1932: 1, 2, 18.
40. ʿAyn’s intelligence, 4 December 1932, CZA, S25/3557; Gad’s intelligence, 1 February 1933, CZA S25/4143; *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 12 February 1933: 5; *al-ʿArab*, 18 February 1933: 6.
41. Al-ʿAwdat 1987: 501–4.
42. Conversation with Yusuf Francis, 4 September 1935, S/25/3051. See also Arnon-Ohanah 1981a: 212n17, 197–212. According to Taysir Dawji, *Filastin* had once reached a print run of 3000, but this had declined by the summer of 1932. He estimated that *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah* was printing 1200 copies a day, *Mirat al-Sharq* 800, *al-Iqdam* fewer than 500, and *al-Karmil* about 1000. He acknowledged that his figures for the last three were less certain than for the first two (Gad’s intelligence, 22 June 1932, CZA S25/4143).
43. Khalidi 1997: 56–7; Shihab 1993: 60.
44. Christians reported having such skills at four times the rate of Muslims (Mills 1933: 206). On the total number of Arabs in 1931, see McCarthy 1990: 36, 37.
45. Ayalon 2005: 16–18.
46. Ayalon 2005: 104–7; Swedenburg 1993: 485.
47. Great Britain 1930b: 129.
48. *Al-ʿArab*, 20 May 1933: 13; ʿAwdat 1987: 41–3; Benson and Svanberg 1998: 65–6.
49. Amin 1988; Pandey 1988.
50. Maloba 1993: 130.
51. Aburish 1988: 41. On this issue in late eighteenth-century France, see Popkin 1990: 81–2.
52. Weir 1981: 145.
53. Weir 1981: 142–3.
54. Bostian 1970: 109–17.
55. Biger 1994: 154–5.
56. Luke and Keith-Roach 1922: 210; Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: II, 870.
57. Great Britain (1929–33) 1929: 64 and 1933: 173.

58. Biger 1994: 154–56.
59. *Filastin* in 1933 gathered some of its news by radio and featured a section called ‘Telegraph, radio and airmail news of the world’ (*Akhbar al-‘alam al-barqiyah wa-l-la-silkiyah wa-l-jawiyah*). Aburish (1988: 45–6) states that in Bethany in 1937, there were only three radios in the village, one of which was in a taxi.
60. Ruth Kark, ‘The raising and lowering of Ottoman clock towers in Jerusalem, unpublished manuscript in Hebrew, cited in Levine 2005: 57.
61. Ayalon 2005: 69–74.
62. Habermas 1991: 32.
63. Darwazah 1993: 85–7.
64. Darwazah 1993: 95; Tamimi and Bahjat 1987: 122.
65. Tamari 2003a: 22–36.
66. Ayalon 2005: 99–101.
67. *Al-Jami‘ah al-islamiyah*, 21 May 1933: 4.
68. Darwazah 1993: 95–6.
69. On the first Arab film, see *Filastin*, 14 March 1935: 7.
70. *Palestine Post*, 15 March 1934: 5.
71. *Al-‘Arab*, 27 August 1932: 14.
72. *Al-‘Arab*, 27 August 1932: 14. On the boycott of Weizmann, see Porath 1977: 35–6.
73. ‘Hizb al-istiqlal al-‘arabi fi-Filastin: bayanuhu wa-qanunuhu’.
74. Kayyali 1988: 291–2.
75. Swedenburg 1993: 484, 485.
76. *Al-‘Arab*, 24 June 1933: 14–15.
77. al-Husayni n.d.: 15.
78. Cf. Kayyali 1973: 172.
79. *Filastin*, 19 August 1932: 3.
80. *Filastin*, 5 August 1932: 1.
81. For members of the Arab Executive and representatives at the seventh Palestinian Arab congress, see al-Hut 1986: 864–6.
82. These five were ‘Awni ‘Abd al-Hadi, Akram Zu‘aytir, Hamdi al-Husayni, Mu‘in al-Madi and Subhi al-Khadra’. The families of al-Madi and Khadra’ formerly had been rural notables. This survey of the party membership is drawn from Appendices 1 and 2 of the present work, and the sources cited therein.
83. Abboushi 1977: 27.
84. ‘Arab Who’s Who’, 5 December 1933, CO733/248/22.
85. Zu‘aytir 1994: 12–13.
86. ‘Arab Who’s Who’, 5 December 1933, CO 733/248/22.
87. Vaschitz 1983: 99, 100; ‘Arab Who’s Who’, 5 December 1933, CO 733/248/22).
88. Gerber 1987: 153–5. Subhi al-Khadra’ and Hajj Amin al-Husayni also graduated from the Ottoman military academy, but had elite backgrounds.

89. Al-Hut 1986: 860, 874.
90. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 21 July 1932: 2 and 22 July 1932: 2, 4; *Filastin*, 21 July 1932: 3.
91. Zu'aytir 1994: 416–22; *al-'Arab*, 3 September 1932, 1 and 18 February 1933: 3.
92. Al-Hut 1986: 272; Zu'aytir 1994: 416–17, 422; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 8 August 1932: 3.
93. There were smaller celebrations in other cities of Palestine and Congress of Youth members may have been active in these. Nonetheless, Haifa was the centre of activity.
94. Gad's intelligence, 25 August 1932, CZA, S25/4122.
95. He had spoken for the Palestine YMMAs at the Islamic Congress in December 1931, a clear sign of his support for Hajj Amin. In addition, his father held a reception for the congress delegates at his home in Wadi Hanin (*al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 December 1931: 3 and 13 December 1931: 4).
96. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 September 1932: 5 and 7 September 1932: 2.
97. Government of Palestine (1933: 36).
98. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 20 July 1932: 3.
99. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 24 March 1932: 3.
100. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 14 July 1932: 3.
101. Zu'aytir 1994: 423–4; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 September 1932: 3.
102. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 July 1932: 3; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 22 May 1932: 2, 3 and 1 August 1932: 3; *Filastin*, 21 August 1932: 7, 23 August 1932: 5 and 1 September 1932: 4.
103. *Al-'Arab*, 3 December 1932: 7, 10.
104. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 22 September 1932: 3, 30 September 1932: 3.
105. *Filastin*, 7 October 1932: 2, 8 October 1932: 2 and 19 October 1932: 5.
106. CID, 10 August 1922, FO 371/16926.
107. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 August 1932: 3.
108. *Filastin*, 2 April 1932: 4; see also *Filastin*, 12 April 1932: 4.
109. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 30 November 1932: 4.
110. *Filastin*, 15 October 1932: 7, and 25 October 1932: 7; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 6 February 1933: 5, 13 February 1933: 4, 28 April 1933: 7, 2 May 1933: 4 and 24 May 1933: 8.
111. CID, 18 February and 1 March 1933, FO 371/16926.
112. CID, 2 June 1933, FO 371/16926.
113. Fleischmann 2003: 116–19.
114. Fleischmann 2003: 142–3, 145–8, 215.
115. Fleischmann 2003: 120–3, 137–40.
116. Eley 1996: 309–13.
117. Budeiri 1979: 73.
118. Abu Hashhash 1990: 26–7. For more on Sidqi, see Tamari 2003b: 79–94.
119. Sidqi 2001: 91, 106.

120. Sidqi 2001: 106–8; CID, 7 July 1933, FO 371/16926.
121. Arslan 1937: 677–8. See also CID, 22 April 1933, FO 371/16926.
122. Arslan 1937: 678–9.
123. Zu‘aytir 1994: 429–31.
124. Gad’s intelligence, 23 September 1932, CZA S25/4122.
125. *Al-‘Arab*, 15 October 1932: 11 and 29 October 1932: 4; see also 8 October 1932: 2.
126. *Al-‘Arab*, 15 October 1932: 1.
127. *Al-‘Arab*, 29 October 1932: 4.
128. *Al-‘Arab*, 26 November 1932: 4, 10 December 1932: 4, 17 December 1932: 5, 24 December 1932: 5, 6, 14 January 1933: 6; Marr 1985: 57.
129. *Al-‘Arab*, 15 October 1932: 5, 17 December 1932: 6 and 24 December 1932: 9.
130. al-Qaysi 1975: 202–3n43.
131. French 1932: 20.
132. *Al-‘Arab*, 17 September 1933: 14, 14 September 1932: 13, 29 October 1932: 5, 1 November 1932: 8, 12 November 1932: 8, 10.
133. Minutes of Arab Executive meeting, 15 August 1932, ISA, Arab Executive Papers, RG: 65/2/p/984/5; *Filastin*, 8 October 1932: 3, 9 October 1932: 6 and 11 October 1932: 3; Zu‘aytir 1994: 426–9.
134. *Filastin*, 29 October 1932: 7; minutes of Arab Executive, 20 October 1932, ISA, Arab Executive papers, RG 65/2/p/984/5.
135. *Filastin*, 21 September 1932: 5.
136. *Al-‘Arab*, 1 October 1932: 5; *Filastin*, 24 September 1932: 4; *al-Jami‘ah al-‘arabiyah*, 22 September 1932: 2.
137. *Al-Fath*, 6 Jamada al-Akhirah 1351: 5.
138. *Al-Fath*, 6 Jamada al-Akhirah 1351: 5.
139. *Filastin*, 25 September 1932: 7.
140. *Al-‘Arab*, 5 November 1932: 4.
141. *Filastin*, 25 October 1932: 7; *al-Jami‘ah al-‘arabiyah*, 4 November 1932: 2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 27 October 1932: 3; Zu‘aytir 1994: 440.
142. *Al-‘Arab*, 5 November 1932: 4.
143. *Filastin*, 3 November 1932: 2; Gad’s intelligence, 4 November 1932, CZA S25/4122.
144. Gad’s intelligence, 4 November 1932, CZA S25/4122; *al-‘Arab*, 5 November 1932: 4.
145. *Al-‘Arab*, 12 November 1932: 13.
146. *Al-‘Arab*, 12 December 1932: 11–14.
147. *Al-‘Arab*, 17 December 1932: 4; CID, 14 December 1932, FO 371/16926.
148. ‘Ayn’s intelligence, 15 December 1932, CZA, S25/3557.
149. *Al-‘Arab*, 17 December 1932: 4.
150. *Filastin*, 15 December 1932: 1, 7.
151. CID, 23 December 1932, FO 371/16926.
152. *Al-‘Arab*, 24 December 1932: 1, 16.

153. Zu'aytir 1980: 36.
154. Gelvin 1998: 225–59.
155. 'Press law in Palestine', 12 April 1932, CO 733/204/7.
156. Drayton 1934: II, 1214–37. On the Ottoman press laws of 1875, 1909 and 1912, see Khuri 1993: 147–68.
157. Drayton 1934: II, 1218.
158. Drayton 1934: II, 1225.
159. Drayton 1934: I, 414–20.
160. CID, 23 December 1932, FO 371/16926.
161. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 23 April 1933: 6.
162. Drayton 1934: I, 623–31.
163. Tibawi 1956: 134–7. The quoted passage is in Drayton 1934: II, 1292–3.
164. Tibawi 1956: 128–33, 138–9; Miller 1985: 91–2, 184n2.
165. Tibawi 1956: 137.
166. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 31 December 1932, CO 733/230/2.
167. Tibawi 1956: 143–4, 160–2.
168. The term is from Tibawi 1956: 196, 210, 258–9; Shepherd 2000: 172–8.
169. These conditions were not embodied in the ordinance, but the officials involved apparently instituted them (Tibawi 1956: 147–8, 204).
170. Drayton 1934: I, 626.
171. Zu'aytir 1994: 395–7.
172. Tibawi 1956: 204.
173. Kayyali 1988: 293; Shepherd 2000: 161.
174. Kayyali 1988: 293.
175. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 10 October 1932: 3.
176. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 August 1932: 3.
177. *Filastin*, 29 September 1932: 5; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 28 September 1932: 3.
178. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 October 1932: 2 and see also 20 January 1933: 3.
179. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 October 1932: 3; *Filastin*, 14 October 1932: 4.
180. Zu'aytir 1994: 267; *al-'Arab*, 7 October 1932: 12 and 15 October: 5, 13, 14, 16.
181. *Al-'Arab*, 29 October 1932: 16, 8 October 1932: 10–11 and 15 October 1932: 10–11.
182. *Al-'Arab*, 29 October 1932: 7 and 15 July 1933: 4.
183. Bayly 2002: 174. The Egyptian paper *al-Liwa'* had a circulation close to 10,000 in 1907 and, in 1909, when the government reactivated an 1881 press law, thousands of demonstrators protested on the streets of Cairo (Baron 1994: 31, 90). Palestinian newspapers in the 1930s seem roughly comparable in numbers printed with those of Damascus in 1918–20 (Gelvin 1998: 239).
184. Popkin 1990: 83, 84; Weir 1981: 113; Schudson 1996: 151.
185. There is no certainty about literacy rates in British colonial America, but it has been guessed that 85 per cent of adult males were literate for the

colonies as a whole by the end of the colonial period, as were perhaps 65 per cent of those of Virginia at the time (Weir 1981: 133–5). The literate proportions of the male population in France toward the end of the 1700s ranged from two-thirds to less than a half, depending on the region. Literacy among women exceeded 50 per cent in only a few areas (Popkin 1990: 80).

186. The point is made by Schudson 1996: 151.

187. Weir 1981: 130.

188. Anderson 1991: 24.

6. The Non-Cooperation Programme

1. CID report, 16 December 1932, FO 371/16926.
2. *Al-ʿArab*, 17 September 1932: 5.
3. *Al-ʿArab*, 3 September 1933: 14, 24 September 1932: 10 and 29 October 1932: 15.
4. Al-Sakakini 1982: 256.
5. Haifa Islamic Society to the high commissioner, 12 April 1929; Jaffa YMMA to high commissioner, 14 May 1929; Hajj Amin al-Husayni to chief secretary, 29 October 1931, ISA, Chief Secretary's papers RG 2/M294/K/186/3/31.
6. Dr Khalil Abu-l-ʿAfiyah to the high commissioner, 30 June 1932, ISA, Chief Secretary's papers, RG2/M294/K/186/3/31; al-Hut 1986: 875.
7. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 3 October 1932: 3; *al-Fath*, 27 Jumada 1351: 3.
8. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 9 November 1932: 2.
9. Gad's intelligence, 15 July 1932, CZA S25/3557; ʿAyn's intelligence, 26 August 1932; Gad's intelligence, 4 and 6 November 1932, CZA S25/4122.
10. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 9 November 1932: 2.
11. *Filastin*, 6 November 1932: 10.
12. *Filastin*, 28 October 1932: 7.
13. *Al-ʿArab*, 1 October 1932: 4, 6, 7; Darwazah 1950: III, 91–2. See also *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 15 December 1932: 3.
14. Al-Sakakini 1982: 241.
15. Zuʿaytir 1994: 469; *al-ʿArab*, 19, 31 December 1932: 1.
16. *Filastin*, 30 December 1932: 6; *al-ʿArab*, 8 October 1932: 6.
17. Zuʿaytir 1994: 482; *al-ʿArab*, 18 February 1933: 8.
18. *Al-ʿArab*, 26 November 1932, flyleaf and 3 December 1932: 2, 15.
19. *Al-ʿArab*, 31 December 1932: 15.
20. *Al-ʿArab*, 24 December 1932: 18.
21. *Al-ʿArab*, 7 January 1933: 12, 13 January 1933: 10, 21 January 1932: 13, 4 February 1933: 10 and 11 February 1933: 19.
22. CID, 28 February 1933, FO 371/16926. See also *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 9 February 1933: 5, 8 and 12 February 1933: 5; *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 22 March 1933: 6.

23. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 12 February 1933: 5.
24. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 13 February 1933: 5; CID, 28 February 1933, FO 371/16926.
25. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 24 February 1933: 5.
26. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 24 February 1933: 5.
27. CID, 1 March 1933, FO 371/16926; report, n.d., CZA S25/3472.
28. *Al-Jamia' al-ʿarabiyah*, 26 February 1933: 6, 7, back page.
29. CID Report, 28 February 1933, FO/371/16926; Darwazah 1950: III, 111; *al-ʿArab*, 4 March 1933: 5.
30. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 26 February 1933: 7; report, n.d., CZA S25/3472.
31. CID, 28 February 1933, FO/371/16926; Darwazah 1950: III, 111; *al-ʿArab*, 4 March 1933: 5; Intelligence about the Jaffa meeting, n.d., CZA S25/3472.
32. CID, 28 February 1933, FO/371/16926.
33. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 27 February 1933: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 19 March 1933: 1; see also 21 March 1933: 5.
34. *Al-ʿArab*, 25 March 1933: 1, 4 March 1933: front and back covers, 11 March 1933: flyleaf.
35. Zuʿaytir 1994: 486–7.
36. *Al-ʿArab*, 4 March 1933: 1.
37. CID, 10 March 1933, FO 371/16926.
38. CID, 15 and 25 March 1933, FO 371/16926; Ayn's intelligence, n.d., CZA, S25, 3557.
39. *Al-ʿArab*, 25 March 1933: 1, 6.
40. Zuʿaytir 1994: 488; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 March 1933: 5.
41. Yazbak 2000: 98–9; Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 246–7.
42. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 124, 125, 462, 463; Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: II, 544.
43. The quoted passage is from 'Secret', E. Mills to Cunliffe-Lister, 1 April 1933, CO 733/239/4 Part I. See also CID, 15 March 1933, FO 371/16926 and *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 26 March 1933: 2.
44. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 April 1933: 1.
45. *Al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah*, 27 March 1933: 4–5 and 28 March 1933: 4. Parts of the articles in *al-Jami'ah al-ʿarabiyah* to which I had access have been clipped. They are reproduced in full in Kayyali 1988: 320–31.
46. Kayyali 1988: 324–8.
47. Zuʿaytir 1994: 490–1; al-Shuqayri n.d.: 133; Darwazah 1950: III, 111–12; CID, 1 April 1933, FO 371/16926; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 March 1933: 5.
48. *Al-ʿArab*, 1 April 1933: 1, 2; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 March 1933: 5, 8; Zuʿaytir 1994: 490.
49. Some 19 Arabs served on government boards. No salaries or pay scales are listed for these positions. Government of Palestine 1932: 176–82.
50. CID Report, 15 April 1933, FO 371/16926.

51. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 28 March 1933: 5. A similar observation is made in CID, 1 April 1933, FO 371/16926.
52. CID, 22 April 1933, FO 371/16926.
53. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 5 May 1933: 5.
54. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 21 May 1933: 4.
55. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 26 May 1933: 5.
56. *Al-'Arab*, 18 March 1933: 2, 3; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 24 March 1933: 5; Zu'aytir 1994: 493.
57. *Al-'Arab*, 29 April 1933: 18, 4 March 1933: 5–6, 25 March 1933: 14 and 22 April 1933: 1, 5, 6.
58. *Al-'Arab*, 22 April 1933: 16; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 24 April 1932: 2.
59. *Al-'Arab*, 15 April 1933: 15–16 and 22 April 1933: 2.
60. *Al-'Arab*, 22 April 1933: 20.
61. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 19 April 1933: 5 and 20 April 1933: 8.
62. CID, 2 May 1933, FO/371/16926.
63. Fleischmann 2003: 121.
64. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 18 April 1932: 6 and 13 January 1933: 4.
65. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 27 February 1933: 3.
66. Zu'aytir 1994: 486.
67. CID, 10 March 1933, FO 371/16926.
68. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 3 April 1933: 2.
69. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 8 March 1933: 5, 1 September 1933: 6 and 4 September 1933: 5. See also *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 20 January 1929: 3.
70. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 May 1933: 6; Shimo'ni 1947: 218.
71. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 7 May 1933: 7.
72. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 4 May 1933: 7.
73. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 30 May 1933: 5 and 31 May 1933: 5.
74. Zu'aytir 1994: 508–10.
75. Extract from Periodical Appreciation Summary, 20 June 1933, CO 733/239/4 Part I.
76. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 3 April 1933: 7.
77. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 3 August 1933: 7.
78. Zu'aytir 1994: 491–2; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 29 September 1930: 2; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 11 January 1931: 1; Khuri 1993: 55.
79. See the flier in CZA, S25/9835.
80. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 22 August 1932: 3, 1 July 1932: 3 and 22 September 1932: 3.
81. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* 19 June 1933: 4.
82. *Filastin*, 17 August 1932: 5. The Ibn Abi Waqas scout troop of Gaza staged the play *The Conquest of Andalus* (*al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 September 1933: 4).
83. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 29 March 1933: 4; see also *al-'Arab*, 1 April 1933: 2.
84. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 30 March 1933: 7.
85. Haim 1962: 97–9.

86. *Al-ʿArab*, 22 October 1932: 11. The quote is Zuʿaytir's (1994: 580).
87. CID, 22 April 1933, FO 371/16926; Zuʿaytir 1994: 492–3, 502.
88. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 30 August 1933: 3, 14 August 1933: 5, 28 August 1933: 3 and 18 September 1933: 5.
89. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 19 July 1933: 5; *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 16 July 1933: 1, 8; *al-ʿArab*, 25 November 1933: 23.
90. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 9 July 1933: 3.
91. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 19 July 1933: 5; *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 16 July 1933: 1, 8.
92. Humphrys to Sir John Simon, 29 December 1932 and 17 January 1933, CO 732/58/3.
93. Oliphant to Humphrys, 5 January 1933, CO 732/58/3.
94. Extract of a note of conversation between Professor Brodetsky and Mr Williams, 16 January 1933, CO 732/58/3.
95. Hathorn Hall to Humphrys, 2 February 1933, CO 732/58/3.
96. Wauchope to Parkinson, 8 February 1933, CO 732/58/3; Wauchope to Parkinson, 9 February 1933; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 1 March 1933.
97. Humphrys to Simon, 20 March 1933, CO 732/58/3.
98. *Al-ʿArab*, 25 March 1933: 5; Marr 1985: 53.
99. *Al-ʿArab*, 1 April 1933: 2.
100. *Al-ʿArab*, 22 April 1933: 3.
101. Arslan 1937: 698, 702.
102. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 20 April 1933: 8.
103. Darwazah 1950: III, 88–9.
104. Arlosoroff n.d.: 297–9.
105. Stein 1984b: 191–2.
106. In early 1930, the Zionist leadership considered mounting a smear campaign to discredit the delegation from the Arab Executive then preparing to go to London. They were aware, however, that the PLDC would not provide them with evidence and they feared potential litigation for liable (Tolkovsky to Kisch, 22 January 1930, L. B. Namier to Kisch, 17 February 1930, Kisch to Tolkovsky, 26 January 1930, CZA, S25/3478 and other documents in this file).
107. Government of Palestine 1933: 30; *Shakhsiyat filastiniyah* 1979: 35.
108. Lewis Andrews to Hilmi al-Husayni, 7 January 1933, 'Wadi Hawarith Arabs', ISA, Department of Land Registry, Box 3372/ Aq/M.
109. Hilmi al-Husayni to Lewis Andrews, 12 January 1933, ISA, Department of Land Registry, Box 3372/ Aq/M.
110. Chancellor to Passfield, 1 March 1930, CO 733/190/7.
111. The names of the owners are listed in 'Contrat De Vente', signed on 13 November 1927, CZA, KKL5/4356.
112. It is unclear whether the figure is in Canadian or US dollars (*Palestine Bulletin*, 21 September 1928, 3; Telegram of Ussishkin to JNF, 20 July 1927; Ettinger to Ussishkin, 16 August 1927, CZA, KKL5/1593).

113. Adler (Cohen) 1988: 200 and map, 201.
114. *Al-ʿArab*, 17 June 1932: 2 and back cover; 'Draft. Wadi El Hawaret', n.d., CZA, KKL5/4354.
115. Cohen 1988: 197–220.
116. *Filastin*, 13 December 1932: 7.
117. CID, 2 June 1933, FO 371/16926; *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 16 June 1933: 2, 2 July 1933: 5, 3 July 1933: 2, 8 and 14 July 1933: 7. The Communist Party's statement is found in CZA/S25/9835.
118. *Al-ʿArab*, 15 July 1933: 2, 5, 31.
119. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 13 July 1933: 5, 16 July 1933: 4, 19 July 1933: 1, 7 and 14 July 1933: 5; *al-ʿArab*, 22 July 1933: back cover.
120. 'Ayn's intelligence, 29 August 1933, CZA, S25/3557; *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 23 July 1933: 1, 8; CID, 30 August 1933, FO 371/16926.
121. *Filastin*, 5 October 1932: 3. See also the reprint of an article in *Davar*, 11 October 1932, in CZA, KKL5/5621 and *Palestine Post*, 31 July 1933: 2.
122. *Filastin*, 8 October 1932: 4; *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 15 August 1933: 2. See also his brief, evasive response in *al-ʿArab*, 15 October 1932: 5, 8.
123. The term is apparently from the French expression 'syndic de faillite'.
124. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 15 August 1933: 2.
125. Friedman and Rotenberg 1937: 646–50.
126. Ashbel 1969: 81; Hankin to Main Office of JNF, 2 March 1927, Ettinger to Hankin, 8 March 1927, note by Ettinger, 20 June 1927, Hankin to Main Office of the JNF, 8 July 1927; Hankin to Granovsky, 12 August 1927, CZA, KKL/1593. Cf. Weitz 1952: 117.
127. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 15 August 1933: 2.
128. 'In heirs of Estranger [sic] vs. Tyan [sic] Estate', 3 September 1928, ISA, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi Papers, RG 66, 171p.
129. 'Hadrat ra'is da'irat al-ijra' al-muhtaram – Nablus' (President of the Bureau Liquidation – Nablus) 23 September 1928, ISA, 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi Papers, RG 66.
130. 'Contrat De Vente' signed on 13 November 1927, CZA, KKL5/4356; Hankin to Main Office of the JNF, 4 November 1928, CZA, KKL5, 3110/1.
131. *Filastin*, 28 September 1928: 1.
132. Untitled and undated draft of a contract in 'Awni 'Abd al-Hadi Papers, ISA, RG 66, 171p.
133. Cf. Weitz 1952: 113, 117 and Avneri 1984: 136. The claim made by Adler (Cohen) that 'Abd al-Hadi was lawyer for the debtors is incorrect. He represented the creditors (Adler (Cohen) 1988: 200). Her statement (Adler (Cohen) 1988: 200, 202, 218n17) that he was paid £P 2700 is apparently based on Stein 1984a: 70, 161. The exchange of letters between Hilmi al-Husayni and Lewis Andrews, cited above, seems to be the source of Stein's assertion. In Stein's version, 'Abd al-Hadi served in the affair as lawyer for the JNF and the PLDC. Adler (Cohen) and Stein cites as proof of 'Abd al-Hadi's involvement with the Zionists a letter by

Hankin to the PLDC dated 3 December 1929 in CZA, Z4/3444/III. My review of the document found that it makes no mention of any collaboration between 'Abd al-Hadi and Zionists.

134. The details of this are even murkier than the Wadi Hawaith affair (Avneri 1984: 145; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 July 1933: 1, 8).
135. Untitled, 5 January 1937, CZA, S25/9783. See also the untitled and undated list of brokers in English in CZA, S25/3472, which was evidently compiled during or after the revolt.
136. *Al-'Arab*, 27 August 1932: 14.
137. *Al-'Arab*, 24 June 1933: 1.
138. CID, 7 July 1933, FO 371/16296.
139. Darwazah 1950: III, 108; Darwazah 1992: I, 828–9. The Jaffa branch was still functioning at the beginning of May 1933; Zu'aytir 1994: 503; *al-'Arab*, 13 May 1933: 7.
140. Zu'aytir 1994: 527–34; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 6 September 1933: 2; al-'Umari 1980: 55, 60–1; Khoury 1987: 400–6, 414–27.
141. Zu'aytir 1994: 539–45; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 12 September 1933: 4, 13 September 1933: 5 and 14 September 1933: 4.
142. Darwazah 1950: III, 88–9.
143. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 28 September 1933: 2; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 29 September 1933: 5, 25 September 1933: 2; *al-'Arab*, 30 September 1933: 2, 6.
144. *Al-'Arab*, 23 September 1933: 11; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 26 September 1933: 8.

7. The Demonstrations of 1933

1. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 28 May 1933: 4; CID, 2 June 1933, FO 371/16926.
2. Bentwich and Bentwich 1965: 149.
3. 'Parliamentary Question', 17 November 1933, FO 371/16927/E 7008.
4. McCarthy 1990: 35.
5. Lockman 1996: 200.
6. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 148; McCarthy 1990: 222.
7. Seikally 1995: 47.
8. Lockman 1996: 218–19; Levine 2005: 84–104.
9. Mansur 1937: 42.
10. Seikally 1995: 72–5, 225; Lockman 1996: 194–6.
11. Seikally 1995: 66, 67, 129, 142; Great Britain 1937: 127.
12. Taquu 1980: 263.
13. *Filastin*, 30 September 1933: 5. See also *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 October 1933: 5; Seikally 1995: 128–9.
14. Lockman 1996: 47–57; Shafir 1996: 59–90.
15. Lockman 1996: 56, 72–8.
16. Lockman 1996: 104–10, 180–6, 192–7, 204–14.

17. Lockman 1996: 101–2; Smith 1993: 156–7.
18. Owen and Pamuk 1999: 60; Halevi 1983: 463, 465.
19. Weissbrod 1983: 329–30, 336.
20. Lockman 1996: 200–2.
21. *Al-'Arab*, 26 February 1933: 6; CID, 18 February 1933, FO/371/16926; Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 25 December 1933; Enclosure III of same; Minute on Memorandum by the Attorney General, 25 December 1933; 'Extract of Jewish Telegraphic Agency Bulletin', 19 December 1934; 'Prevention of Intimidation (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 12 of 1934', enclosure of OAG H. Hathorn Hall to Cunliffe-Lister, 8 September 1934, CO 733/250/1; Lockman 1996: 199–200.
22. Great Britain 1937: 219–20, 229; Stein 1980: 233–60.
23. Kamen 1991: 51–60.
24. Government of Palestine 1930: 43–4, 49, 50.
25. Stein 1984a: 144.
26. Government of Palestine 1930: 44; Kamen 1991: 198.
27. Great Britain 1937: 263.
28. Great Britain 1937: 220–1.
29. Graham-Brown 1982: 110.
30. Kamen 1991: 93–7.
31. Great Britain 1937: 263.
32. Government of Palestine 1930: 44.
33. Stein 1984a: 145; Great Britain 1937: 250.
34. Great Britain 1937: 224.
35. Graham-Brown 1982: 98–9.
36. Great Britain 1937: 127, 276–7.
37. El-Eini 1997. The Istiqlalist Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim organized a private initiative two years before (*Filastin*, 31 October 1933: 5).
38. Taqqu 1980: 266–71.
39. Graham-Brown 1982: 151–2.
40. Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 474.
41. Metzger 1998: 146.
42. Great Britain 1937: 269.
43. 'Memorandum on conditions of employment at the end of December 1933', enclosure to dispatch of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 3 February 1934, CO 733/248/8.
44. Metzger 1998: 148; Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry 1991: I, 336.
45. On Ghusayn's wealth and his orange orchards, see Esco Foundation for Palestine 1947: 733. On Rok and al-Muzaffar, see below.
46. 'Arab Who's Who', 5 December 1933, CO 733/248/22.
47. *Filastin*, 8 December 1933: 4.
48. *Filastin*, 27 October 1933: 6. On shipping destinations, see *Filastin*, 10 November 1933: 3.
49. Halevi 1983: 464, 467.

50. 'Memorandum on conditions of employment at the end of December 1933', enclosure to dispatch of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 3 February 1934, CO 733/248/8.
51. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 24 August 1934, CO 733/249/8.
52. 'Memorandum on conditions of employment in Palestine at the end of October, 1933', enclosure to dispatch of 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/11.
53. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/11.
54. *Al-ʿArab*, 17 December 1932: 3. See also Masalha 1992: 5–38.
55. *Al-ʿArab*, 29 April 1933: 1.
56. *Al-ʿArab*, 29 April 1933: 1.
57. A British intelligence summary placed the beginning of the press campaign in mid-September (CID, 11 October 1933, FO 371/16927). There is no doubt, however, that *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah* began to give the matter intense coverage in mid-August.
58. H. P. Rice, Deputy Inspector General to the Chief Secretary, 8 September 1933, enclosed in dispatch of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/1.
59. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 1 October 1933: 5.
60. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 25 August 1933: 1, 8 and 26 August 1933: 1, 6.
61. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 22 August 1933: 6, 24 September 1933: 4, 18 September 1933, 1, 25 September 1933: 7 and 29 September 1933: 1.
62. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 16 August 1934: 3.
63. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 28 September 1933: 4.
64. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 2 October 1933: 4.
65. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 3 October 1933: 1.
66. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 3 October 1933: 5.
67. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 27 August 1933: 1, 8.
68. CID, 30 December 1935 and 26 January 1936, FO 371/20018.
69. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 8 October 1933: 4.
70. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 5 October 1933: 3.
71. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 6 October 1933: 4.
72. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 5 October 1933: 1.
73. CID, 22 September and 7 October 1933, FO 371/16926.
74. *Al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 29 September 1933: 7.
75. *Al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 11 October 1933: 5.
76. CID, 22 September and 7 October 1933, FO 371/16926.
77. Darwazah 1950: III, 112; Zuʿaytir 1994: 545; *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 4 October 1933: 5 and 5 October 1933: 5.
78. *Filastin*, 8 October 1933: 5. See also *al-Jamiʿah al-ʿarabiyah*, 8 October 1933: 4; *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 11 October 1933: 4.
79. Darwazah 1950: III, 112; Zuʿaytir 1994: 546.
80. Zuʿaytir 1994: 545–8; Darwazah 1950: III, 112; *al-Jamiʿah al-islamiyah*, 9 October 1933: 5.

81. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 October 1933: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 10 October 1933: 2.
82. Arabic press summary, 11 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 11 October 1933: 5 and 10 October 1933: 4.
83. Lockman 1996: 186–92, 202–4, 206–10, 218–20; Jabra 1935: 5–6.
84. Gad reports, 11 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
85. Intelligence, 10 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
86. Report from Hebron, 11 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
87. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 10 October 1933: 5; Official Communiqué No. 38/33, 11 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
88. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 12 October 1933: 3.
89. Intelligence from Ni'man, 10 October 1933, CZA, S25/3560.
90. Murison and Trusted 1934: 91. This copy is found in FO 371/17876.
91. CID, 16 and 23 October 1933, FO 371/16927; Murison and Trusted 1934: 92.
92. Telegram of Jewish Agency to Zionist Bureau, London, 13 October 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
93. CID, 15 November 1933, FO 371/16926.
94. Murison and Trusted 1934: 92.
95. Murison and Trusted 1934: 93.
96. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 15 October 1933: 5; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 16 October 1933: 7.
97. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 October 1933: 6.
98. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 24 October 1933: 4 and 25 October 1933: 4; *al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 23 October 1933: 3.
99. *Al-'Arab*, 28 October 1933: 17.
100. 'Official Communiqué No. 43/33', 25 October 1933, CZA, S 25/4228.
101. Murison and Trusted 1934: 94.
102. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 October 1933: 7.
103. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 26 October 1933: 4.
104. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 October 1933: 4; *Filastin*, 27 October 1933: 6.
105. *Filastin*, 27 October 1933: 4.
106. Some 15 months later, the Arab Workers Society represented port workers in a dispute with captains (*Filastin*, 2 February 1935: 4).
107. CID, 15 November 1933, FO 371/16926.
108. Lockman 1996: 217–29.
109. *Filastin*, 26 October 1933: 6.
110. 'Memorandum on conditions of employment in Palestine at the end of October 1933', enclosure III to dispatch of 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/11.
111. *Ibid.*; Murison and Trusted 1934: *erratum* on 101, 104.
112. *Al-'Arab*, 28 October 1933: 1, 19, 20.
113. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, Supplement 2, 29 October 1933: 1; *al-'Arab*, 28 October 1933: 19–20.

114. 'Arab Who's Who', 5 December 1934, CO 733/248/22.
115. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, Supplement 2, 29 October 1933: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 29 October 1933: 3; CID, 15 November 1933, FO 371/16926; Murison and Trusted 1934: 99–102.
116. Murison and Trusted 1934: 100, 104.
117. CID, 15 November 1933, FO 371/16926.
118. Murison and Trusted 1934: 104.
119. *Filastin*, 29 October 1933: 1.
120. *Filastin*, 29 October 1933: 1; Murison and Trusted 1934: 98.
121. *Filastin*, 9 November 1933: 3; Jardine and Davies n.d.: 9, 86, 180.
122. CID, 15 November 1933, FO 371/16926.
123. *Al-'Arab*, 25 November 1933: 3–5.
124. Quoted in Arnon-Ohanah 1981a: 168.
125. Quoted Porath 1986: 59.
126. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/1.
127. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 16 October 1933: 5.
128. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 9 November 1933: 3; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 5 November 1933: 3 and 8 November 1933: 5; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 8 November 1933: 1.
129. Arab Office intelligence, 10 and 13 November 1933, CZA, S25/4225.
130. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 20 November 1933: 2.
131. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 November 1933: 4.
132. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 April 1934 and the enclosed 'Rex versus Auni Abdul Hadi and 17 others', CO 733/258/1; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 4 December 1933: 1, 4 December 1933: 1, 24 December 1933: 4 and 6 July 1934: 3; *al-Difa'*, 4 July 1934: 5 and 6 July 1934: 4.
133. Khalaf 1991: 81.
134. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 14 December 1933: 2 and 8 December 1933: 3.
135. Enclosure 1 of dispatch of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 23 December 1933, CO 733/257/1.
136. Paraphrase telegram [of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister], 15 March 1934, and T. Philips at Treasury, Whitehall to Undersecretary of State, 28 March 1934, CO 733/250/8.
137. 'Agreement between the Government of Palestine and the Supreme Moslem Council', 8 April 1934, CO 733/250/8.
138. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 February 1934, CO 733/258/1.
139. Arab Office intelligence, 8 January 1934, CZA, S25/4225.
140. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 February 1934, CO 733/258/1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 12 January 1934: 4.
141. Arab Office intelligence, 15 January 1934, CZA, S25/3542.
142. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 February 1934, CO 733/258/1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 15 January 1934: 4.
143. J. E. F. Campbell, Jerusalem District Commissioner to Chief Secretary, enclosure 1 of Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 February 1934, CO 733/258/1.

144. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 23 January 1934: 4, 5, 7, 10, 11.
145. Wauchope to Cunliffe-Lister, 5 February 1934, CO 733/258/1.
146. CID, 30 January 1934, FO 371/17878.
147. Reply to a questionnaire, 30 May 1934, CZA, S 25/3472.
148. Conversation with Hasan Sidqi Dajani, 1 November 1933, CZA, S25/3051.
149. *Al-Difa'*, 30 May 1934: 1.
150. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 3 June 1934: 1.
151. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 August 1934: 3.
152. Raghib al-Nashashibi and Hasan Sidqi al-Dajani resigned as respective president and secretary of the party in 1933. After this point, the Ummah party vanishes from the press (*Filastin*, 7 October 1933: 4).
153. Arlosoroff (n.d.: 297–9) emphasized his opposition to the council. See also Porath 1977: 145–6.
154. Drafts of legislation to create colonial legislative councils had been prepared some years previously by parliamentary legal advisers (Hathorn Hall to Cosmo Parkinson of the Colonial Office, 22 May 1935, CO 733/275/1). See also other documents in this file.
155. Porath 1977: 62–3; al-Hut 1986: 298–301.
156. CID, 21 January and 27 June 1935, FO 371/18957; paraphrase of a telegram from the High Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary, 27 June 1935, CO 733/275/1.
157. CID, 13 February 1935, FO 371/18957; *Filastin*, 25 January 1935: 5.
158. al-Hut 1986: 742–3.
159. Cited in Khillah 1982: 564.
160. *Filastin*, 2 February 1935: 5.
161. CID, 28 September 1935, FO 371/18957; *Filastin*, 26 March 1935: 5.
162. *Filastin*, 26 January 1935: 2 and 30 January 1935: 2.
163. CID report, 20 April 1935, FO 371/18957.
164. 'Qanun al-hizb al-'arabi al-filastini' (By-law of the Palestine Arab Party), ISA RG 65/2/986p/3406.
165. Minute by J. R. W., 2 August 1935 and CID reports, 14 August and 28 September, 1935, FO 371/18957.
166. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 14 July 1935: 3, 16 July 1935: 3 and 8 August 1935: 3; *Filastin*, 2 August 1935: 7; CID, 5 and 24 August 1935, FO 371/18957.
167. CID, 28 September 1935, FO 371/18957.
168. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 8 August 1935: 3.
169. CID report, 31 May 1935, FO 371/18957.
170. CID, 30 December 1935, FO 371/20018.
171. al-Hut 1986: 747.
172. CID, 5 August 1935, FO 371/18957; al-Hut 1986: 310–14, 747–8, 885–6.
173. CID, 24 August 1935, FO 371/18957; *Filastin*, 19 December 1935: 5.
174. *Filastin*, 1 December 1935: 7, 27 November 1935: 7 and 7 December 1935: 4.
175. Lockman 1996: 217–20, 223.
176. 'Arab who's Who', 5 December 1933, CO 733/248/22.

177. *Filastin*, 11 January 1935: 6.
178. *Filastin*, 10 July 1935: 5 and 31 July 1935: 5.
179. *Al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 6 August 1935: 3; *Filastin*, 8 August 1935: 4.
180. Budeiri 1997: 196. See also Johnson 1982: 16, 57–8.

8. Through the Lens of 1936

1. McAdam et al. 2001: 138.
2. Johnson 1982: 47. Porath (1977: 163–4) expresses some suspicion about the spontaneity of the strike.
3. Mansfield 1971: 261–8.
4. Khoury 1987: 457–62.
5. Mosse 1978: 207–9.
6. 'Prevention of Intimidation (Amendment) Ordinance, No. 12 of 1934', enclosure in OAG J. Hathorn Hall to Philip Cunillfe-Lister, 8 September 1934, CO 733/250/1.
7. CID, 28 September 1935, FO 371/18957.
8. Minute by J. W. R., 9 March 1935, FO 371/18957.
9. CID, 22 January and 18 February 1935, FO 371/20018. A similar assessment is found in *Filastin*, 8 October 1935: 6.
10. CID, 31 January 1935, CO 733/278/13.
11. Van Creveld 1998: 29–34.
12. Telegram from Officer Administering Government to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 22 October 1935, CO 733/278/13.
13. This was Ibrahim al-Shanti's assessment (see *al-Difa'*, 19 July 1935: 1).
14. *Filastin*, 8 October 1935: 1, 6.
15. *Filastin*, 17 October 1935: 1.
16. *Filastin*, 16 October 1935: 5, 19 October 1935: 5, 21 October 1935: 5 and 24 October 1935: 5; CID report, 30 October 1935, FO 371/18975.
17. Zu'aytir 1980: 3–5.
18. *Filastin*, 24 October 1935: 5; *al-Difa'*, 17 October 1935: 4.
19. *Filastin*, 30 October 1935: page number obscured.
20. CID, 30 October 1935, FO 371/18975.
21. *Filastin*, 28 October 1935: 7.
22. Zu'aytir 1980: 7.
23. CID, 30 October 1935, FO 371/18975.
24. *Filastin*, 2 November 1935: 5.
25. *Palestine Post*, 3 November 1935: 1, 5.
26. *Palestine Post*, 3 November 1935: 1, 5; Zu'aytir 1980: 8–13.
27. Zu'aytir 1980: 9.
28. Zu'aytir 1980: 9.
29. *Filastin*, 5 November 1935: 5 and 6 November 1935: 5; Zu'aytir 1980: 13–14; CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957.
30. Zu'aytir 1980: 15. Issues of *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* from this period were

missing from the collection to which I had access. I presume that the paper carried Zu'aytir's statements. As we shall see, editions of *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* and *al-Difa'* in later months carried statements of this sort issued by Zu'aytir and other activists.

31. *Filastin*, 1 November 1935: 5.
32. *Palestine Post*, 3 November 1935: 1; *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah*, 1 November 1935: 3; *Filastin*, 3 November 1935: 7; CID, 30 October 1935, FO 371/18975.
33. Rice to Chief Secretary, 21 December 1935, CO 733/297/1.
34. 'Abd al-Rahman had been the owner of *al-Ittihad al-'arabi*, which was published from 1925 until 1927 (Khuri 1993: 44).
35. Yusuf Francis, a journalist and correspondent for papers in Egypt, Beirut and Damascus, estimated that *al-Difa'* published 3600 copies per issue, whereas *Filastin* and *al-Jami'ah al-'arabiyah* published about 2000 and *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah* about 1200 (conversation with Yusuf Francis, 5 September 1935, CZA S/25 3051). See also CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957.
36. H. P. Rice, Deputy Inspector General of CID to Chief Secretary, 21 December 1935, CO 733/297/1.
37. *Filastin*, 12 November 1935: 4.
38. *Filastin*, 12 November 1935: 5. See also Zu'aytir 1980: 18.
39. *Filastin*, 12 November 1935: 1.
40. CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957.
41. Zu'aytir 1980: 18–19.
42. *Filastin*, 13 November 1935: 5 and 12 November 1935: 4, 5; Zu'aytir 1980: 20–1.
43. *Filastin*, 12 November 1935: 5.
44. *Filastin*, 13 November 1935: 5.
45. *Filastin* 13 November 1935: 5.
46. CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957; *Filastin*, 14 November 1935: 1.
47. Zu'aytir 1980: 23.
48. Zu'aytir 1980: 25.
49. Zu'aytir 1980: 26.
50. She was also the wife of the owner of the Haifa paper, *al-Karmil* (Fleischmann 2003: 123, 132, 269n46, 273n107).
51. CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957.
52. *Filastin*, 14 November 1935: 1.
53. CID, 16 November 1935, FO 371/18957.
54. *Filastin*, 17 November 1935: 7.
55. Al-Hut 1986: 317–20.
56. Zu'aytir 1980: 415.
57. *Filastin*, 5 May 1933: 5.
58. Al-Hut 1986: 271.
59. Schleifer 1979: 69, 71–5; Schleifer 1993: 171–7; Porath 1977: 134–5, 337n194 and n198. It is clear from Akram Zu'aytir's diaries (1980: 27–8) that he was completely uninformed of al-Qassam's organization. On

- the Sufi orders, see DeJong 1983: 156, 178; Glassé 1991: s.v. 'Qadiriyya' and 'Tijaniyya'.
60. Salafis did not necessarily consider Sufism reprehensible, but typically criticized its spectacles and superstitions (see Commins 1990: 57–9, 80–1).
 61. Al-Hut 1986: 320.
 62. Fleischmann 2003: 183–6, 297n52.
 63. *Filastin*, 22 November 1935: 5.
 64. Zu'aytir 1980: 29–33.
 65. *Filastin*, 30 November 1935: 1.
 66. CID, 30 December 1935, FO 371/20018; *Filastin*, 1 December 1935: 7 and 10 December 1935: 4; *al-Liwa'*, 10 December 1935: 5.
 67. *Filastin*, 4 December 1935: 5.
 68. Zu'aytir 1980: 40; *al-Liwa'*, 15 December 1935: 1, 8. See also *Filastin*, 20 September 1935: 1.
 69. *Filastin*, 18 December 1935: 5 and 19 December 1935: 1.
 70. CID report, 30 December 1935, FO 371/20018; *al-Liwa'*, 22 December 1935: 1.
 71. Dr Khalil Taha to Jamal al-Husayni, 30 December 1935, ISA, RG 65/p/3098 b.
 72. Nuwayhid 1993: 182–3.
 73. CID, 22 January 1935, FO 371/20018.
 74. Ahmad al-Imam to Jamal al-Husayni, 8 and 21 December 1935, ISA, Arab Political Organizations, RG 65/391/p/3098 b; Dr Khalil Taha to Jamal al-Husayni, 30 December 1935, ISA, RG 65/p/3098 b; CID, 22 January 1935, FO 371/20018.
 75. Jamal al-Husayni to Dr Khalil Taha, 10 December 1935, ISA, Arab Political Organizations, RG 65/391/p/3098 b.
 76. CID, 22 January 1935, FO 371/20018.
 77. CID, 18 February 1935, FO 371/20018; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 27 January 1936: 4; Zu'aytir 1980: 43–8.
 78. CID, 18 February and 10 March 1936, FO 371/20018; *Palestine Post*, 5 February 1936: 1, 7; Zu'aytir 1980: 48–9.
 79. See Hamdi al-Husayni's assessment in *al-Difa'*, 9 February 1936: 1, 7.
 80. CID 30 December 1935, 17 March 1936, FO 371/20018.
 81. *Al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 12 April 1936: 5; *al-Liwa'*, 12 April 1936: 5.
 82. Lockman 1996: 229.
 83. Lockman 1996: 232–3; CID, 3 March 1936, FO 371/20018; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 10 March 1936: 1; Zu'aytir 1980: 50.
 84. CID, 3 March 1936, FO 371/20018.
 85. Dispatch by Wauchope to J. H. Thomas, Secretary of State for the Colonies, 9 March 1936, CO 733/297/1.
 86. Sub-enclosure to enclosure IV, in dispatch by Wauchope to Thomas, 9 March 1936, CO 733/297/1.

87. Al-Hut 1986: 888.
88. Sub-enclosure to Enclosure IV, in Dispatch by Wauchope to Thomas, 9 March 1936, CO 733/297/1.
89. CID report, 11 April 1936, FO 371/20018.
90. CID report, 11 April 1936, FO 371/20018; Benny Morris 1999: 120, 128.
91. CID, 6 May 1936 and 23 June 1936, FO 371/20018.
92. *Palestine Post*, 21 April 1936: 1, 5; Kalkas 1971: 240.
93. Zu'aytir 1980: 60–1.
94. Zu'aytir 1980: 60–8; *al-Difa'*, 20 April 1936: 4, 5.
95. CID, 6 May and 23 June 1936, FO 371/20018; Kayyali 1988: 377–8; Nuwayhid 1993: 190.
96. Zu'aytir 1980: 72.
97. Zu'aytir 1980: 72.
98. Zu'aytir 1980: 2, 55.
99. CID report, 6 May and 23 June 1936, FO 371/20018.
100. Zu'aytir 1980: 73.
101. Porath 1977: 164–5.
102. *Al-Difa'*, 3 May 1936: 7 and 5 May 1936: 5.
103. Paraphrase of a telegram of the High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 5 May 1936, CO 733/297/2; High Commissioner to Colonial Secretary, 8 May 1936, CO 733/310/1; minutes of a meeting at Government House, CO 733/310/2; *al-Jami'ah al-islamiyah*, 8 May 1936: 3; *al-Difa'*, 9 May 1936: 1, 5 and 11 May 1936: 1.
104. High Commissioner to the Colonial Secretary, 23 May 1936, CO 733/310/2.
105. CID, 23 June 1936, FO 371/20018.
106. His group soon joined the guerrilla organization led by 'Abd al-Qadir al-Husayni (Abu Gharbiyah 1993: 3–5, 18–26, 48–50).
107. CID, 23 June 1936, FO 371/20018.
108. Mattar 1988: 76–9; Porath 1977: 170; Kalkas 1971: 250.
109. Porath 1977: 212; al-Hut 1986: 354–8; al-Hut 1979: 458–60; Morris 1999: 134–5.
110. Great Britain 1937: 381–2, 389–91; Masalha 1992: 49–91.
111. Mattar 1988: 81–3.
112. Kupferschmidt 1987: 255–7.
113. Porath 1977: 238–9; Shepherd 2000: 191.
114. Sherman 1997: 256.
115. Morris 1999: 144–60.
116. Hurewitz 1956: 219–26 (quoted passages, 222, 225).
117. Khalidi 2001: 27.
118. Nuwayhid 1993: 191–2. These remarks may actually represent the outlook of Nuwayhid more than that of al-'Alami.
119. Swedenburg 1993: 489–501; Swedenburg 1995: 76ff; Arnon-Ohanah 1981b: 229–47.

Appendices

1. Al-Hut 1986: 879; Zu'aytir 1994: 415.
2. *Al-ʿArab*, 11 March 1933: 7; Shim'oni 1947: 210.
3. Darwazah 1993: 214.
4. Darwazah 1993: 215.
5. Shimo'ni 1947: 210.
6. Al-Hut 1986: 856, 864.
7. Darwazah 1993: 211.
8. Shubayb 1981: 59–60.
9. Budeiri 1979: 91, 116n18; Shimo'ni 1947: 210.
10. Darwazah 1993: 204–6.
11. Darwazah 1993: 144–7, 152–3, 174–8, 191–4, 197–8, 212–13, 272–5.
For a bibliography of his writings, see ʿAwdat 1987: 213–16.
12. Shubayb 1981: 60; Nuwayhid 1981: 271–2.
13. Nuwayhid 1981: 58–9; al-Hut 1986: 56.
14. Hamdi Husaini file, Education Department, ISA, M/1010/E/1A/147/2.
15. Al-Hut 1986: 488.
16. Budeiri 1979: 25.
17. Shimo'ni 1947: 210.
18. ʿAwdat 1987: 161–3.
19. Darwazah (1993: 210) reckoned that al-Madi was a few years younger than he was.
20. ʿAwdat 1987: 563–7.
21. Hamadah 1991: 109–10.
22. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 14 December 1933: 3.
23. Intelligence report, 3 October 1938 and profile of George Mansur, 7 December 1939, CZA, S 25/3045.
24. Hamadah 1991: 110.
25. Darwazah 1993: 152, 159–60.
26. ʿAwdat 1987: 641–5.
27. Al-Sabi' 1951: 5–7, 11–15; Nuwayhid 1981: 240–1.
28. ʿAwdat 1987: 286–7.
29. Al-Sabi' 1951: 10, 64.
30. *Al-Sirat al-mustaqim*, 23 November 1931: 1.
31. Abu Hammad 1979: 12–13; ʿAwdat 1987: 330–3.
32. Shim'oni 1947: 233; Kamal 1995: 18.
33. Zu'aytir 1994: 7, 8, 10.
34. ʿAwdat 1987: 239–44.

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