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**FACTIONALISM AND THE TRADITIONAL PALESTINIAN
ARAB LEADERSHIP'S RESISTANCE TO BRITISH AND
JORDANIAN POLITICAL POLICY (1920-1967):
A RECONSIDERATION**

by

Roger P. Dietrich

B.A. (Honours), Simon Fraser University, 1991

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
History

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to assess the effects which factionalism had upon the traditional Palestinian Arab leadership's ability to resist British and Jordanian occupier political policy from 1920-1967. Most scholarship has tended to focus upon the debilitating effect which factionalism had on the Palestinian leaders' efforts to obtain self-governing institutions. While this thesis does not take issue with this interpretation it seeks to introduce another component to the debate which has been largely ignored. The role which British and Jordanian political policy played in hindering the development of self-governing institutions and an independent Arab Palestinian state must also be assessed when deciding if the urban notables failed in their duties as leaders of the Palestinian community. It is suggested here that self-defeating factionalism was only one element in the Palestinian leadership's inability to obtain an independent state. The overriding effects of British and Jordanian political policy seriously hindered the Palestinian drive for self-governing institutions and eventual independence. The loss of statehood was the result of a combination of these two factors and not simply a failure in leadership.

The sources which are utilized throughout the thesis are predominantly English language secondary sources. Primary documentation is derived mainly from British government commissions of inquiry and statements of policy.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of Father Michael Cundari who taught me that kindness and compassion does not mean weakness.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Professor Bill Cleveland for his patience and guidance during the writing of this manuscript and for sharing his knowledge of the historical method and the Middle East. Also, a special thanks to Professor John Spagnolo who instilled in me the idea that the problems of the Middle East must be viewed as "layers of complication". I must also thank my two colleagues Paul Horton and Jim Quilty who unselfishly gave of their time to ensure that I would succeed as a graduate student. More importantly, I am proud to call Jim and Paul my good friends. I would like to thank Joanna, Julie, Denise, Maylene and Joan for putting up with my incessant requests for help during my six year stay at S.F.U. A special thanks to Denise for assisting me in the technical aspects of the world of computers. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the memory of the King of Rock and Roll Elvis Presley and thank him for all those bad movies which I watched at four a.m. every night when I could not read another page. I know you are alive Elvis, Call me!

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Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the two periods of occupation immediately preceding that of Israel, those of Britain and Jordan,(1920-1967); more specifically it focuses on the activities of the "traditional" Palestinian Arab leadership during this period. The thesis defines the traditional Palestinian Arab leadership as a small class of officeholding urban notables who through a combination of economic and political power dominated Palestinian politics. Political power in Palestine during the Ottoman Empire was concentrated at the apex of the socio-economic pyramid by a small group of notable families. Ottoman statesmen utilized this class to carry out their reforms. The notables were indispensable to the Ottomans as they acted as intermediaries between government and the people. No reform could be implemented without the consent and assistance of the urban notable families. The British occupation did not cause an eclipse of notable power. "British policy" strengthened "the position of the already dominant notables led by the Husayni and Nashashibi clans in Jerusalem."¹ Likewise, the Jordanian period saw the traditional Palestinian Arab leaders still acting as intermediaries between the people and government.² It is to this group that British and Jordanian leaders turned their attention in order to implement their political policies.

The term "political policy" as used in the thesis refers to the British and Jordanian initiatives in developing the administration and self-governing institutions of Palestine and the West Bank. The complexity of the Palestinian problem is such that focussing on one aspect of occupation policy might be considered too myopic; this study chooses to restrict its analysis to the political policy of occupation for two reasons. First, land and

1 Joel S. Migdal, "Continuity and Change in Palestinian Society," *The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank: A Handbook*, editors Anne Sinai, Allen Pollack, (New York: American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, 1977), p. 202.

2 Avi Plascov, *The Palestinian Refugees in Jordan, 1948-1957*, (London: Cass, 1981), p. 31.

immigration policy became a moot point with the annexation of the West Bank by Jordan. Second, land and immigration policy during the British mandate, like the socio-economic underpinnings of the Palestinian notable leadership, have been dealt with extensively in other studies.

The scholarship has put so much emphasis on the socio-economic basis of the Palestinian notables that it has unduly neglected the issue of occupation policy, especially the continuities linking Anglo-Jordanian policies. The originality of this thesis lies in its assessment of the response of the traditional Palestinian Arab leadership during both the British and Jordanian periods; no existing study has attempted this. This study examines the continuity of the Palestinian response to the British and Jordanian periods. Studies such as Yehoshua Porath's two books The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918-1929 and The Palestinian Arab National Movement, 1929-1939, From Riots to Rebellion as well as Bernard Wasserstein's work The British in Palestine: The Mandatory Government and the Arab-Jewish Conflict, 1917-1929 and Ann Lesch's work Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939: The Frustration of a National Movement have covered the 1917-1939 period in Palestine. J.C. Hurewitz's book The Struggle for Palestine and Issa Khalaf's work Politics in Palestine: Arab Factionalism and Social Disintegration, 1939-1948 cover the 1939 to 1948 period.

The Jordanian period is equally segmented. Aqil Abidi's book Jordan: A Political Study, 1948-1957 and Naseer H. Aruri's book Jordan: A Study in Political Development, 1921-1965, explain the traditional Palestinian leadership's response to the first nine years of Jordanian rule. Clinton Bailey's The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan as well as Shaul Mishal's West Bank\East Bank, The Palestinians in Jordan, 1949-1967 and Avi Plascov's The Palestinian Refugees in Jordan, 1948-1967 offer an overview of the entire Jordanian period.

Although each of these books is excellent and indispensable when studying specific periods of Palestinian history, they are narrow in the sense that they analyse the occupier-

elite relationship in small historical segments. I have chosen not to separate Palestinian history into disparate eras but to examine it as a continuous process. Moreover, my approach allows for an assessment of occupier policy in the same manner. Studies such as Paul Hanna's British Policy In Palestine and Michael Cohen's two books Retreat from the Mandate: The Making of British Policy, 1936-1945 and Palestine and the Great Powers, 1945-1948 adequately analyse the British mandate period. The afore mentioned works of Mishal and Bailey offer insight into Jordanian policy. However, there is no continued analysis of both the British and Jordanian periods. This thesis rectifies this scholarly gap.

Admittedly, there are studies which focus on the Palestinian case throughout both the British and Jordanian periods. Two examples are Pamela Ann Smith's Palestine and the Palestinians, 1876-1983 and David Gilmour's Dispossessed: The Ordeal of the Palestinians, 1917-1980. However, this study is different because it focuses specifically on political/administrative policy. The thesis also analyzes the role of factionalism in determining the capacity of the Palestinian Arab leadership to meet the demands of British and Jordanian occupation policies.

Studies dealing with the Palestinian Arab leadership almost always touch upon the problem of factionalism. Factionalism stemmed from the structure of Palestinian society which was based on a sort of "pyramidal structure."³ Political ties were maintained from the peasant village to the towns to the national elite through a network of clan alliances headed by major urban notables in Jerusalem. This type of organization had both a positive and negative side. On the positive side a pyramidal organization meant a potential for "rapid mobilisation."⁴ Conversely, a pyramidal organization made it extremely difficult to create a unified national movement. Each leading family possessed a power base in its

3 Issa Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine: Arab Factionalism and Social Disintegration, 1939-1948*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 19.

4 Ann Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939: The Frustration of a Nationalist Movement*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 236.

client villages and town quarters. The end result was a series of autonomous families.⁵ The imposition of British and Jordanian rule did not eradicate this system of shifting alliances. Both occupations "reinforced old divisions."⁶

Rival families continued to fight amongst themselves over the acquisition of political power.⁷ By acquiring public offices and government positions rival families could dispense patronage which had the effect of maintaining their power. In short, political rivalry on the national level was rarely based on differences of ideology or program. Factionalism stemmed from a dispute over who would control the Palestinian nationalist movement and the potential fruits thereof.⁸

Certainly this ongoing system of clan divisions and shifting alliances handicapped the traditional Palestinian Arab leaders in resisting occupation policy. Most historians of the Palestinian Arab leadership would agree that factionalism "seriously impeded the drive for Palestinian national independence..."⁹ While this thesis does not take issue with such a contention, it suggests that another perspective might offer a more complete explanation as to why the Palestinian leaders were unable to achieve independence. The effects of British and Jordanian policy must also be assessed when accounting for the failure of the Palestinian leaders to acquire self-governing institutions and an independent state.

Thus, the purpose of this thesis is twofold. First the thesis will assess whether or not factionalism destroyed the Palestinian leadership's ability to effect change on occupation policy. Second, the thesis will consider the extent to which British and Jordanian political policy played a role in frustrating the Palestinian leadership's objectives

5 Ann Moseley Lesch and William Quandt, *The Politics of Palestinian Nationalism*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 17.

6 Donna Robinson Divine, "The Dialectics of Palestinian Politics", *Palestinian Society and Politics*, editor Joel S. Migdal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 221.

7 David Waines, "The Failure of the Nationalist Resistance", *The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, editor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 218.

8 J.C. Hurewitz, *The Struggle for Palestine*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968), p. 61.

9 Taysir Nashif, "Palestinian Arab and Jewish Leadership in the Mandate Period", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, p. 121.

of obtaining some form of independent representative government. Simply put, the thesis asks whether the continued occupation of Palestine and the West Bank resulted from a failure of leadership, or whether British and Jordanian policy overrode the efforts by the Palestinian leaders to achieve an independent state.

Chapter I

FACTIONALISM AND THE PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE TO
CHANGE BRITISH POLICY (1920-1936)

Although there can be no doubt that factionalism existed among members of the Palestinian elite, it should be noted that notables did, in certain instances, cooperate. Furthermore, this cooperation had the effect of forcing certain changes in British policy toward the Arab community in Palestine. This Chapter examines the cycle of notable factionalism and cooperation during the British occupation and suggests that the latter played a more prominent role in the evolution of British policy in Palestine than has been previously thought. Moreover, the Chapter also analyses the nature of British policy concerning the implementation of self-governing institutions. It seems that British policy was opposed to the creation of a Legislative Council, a point which some historians have overlooked when assessing the Palestinian Arab leaders' effectiveness in securing this goal. It is suggested here that, contrary to historical opinion, the notables overcame factionalism at crucial times and effected positive change on policy. That the Palestinian community was still without a Legislative Council by 1936 had much to do with immobile British policy as well as the inability of the Palestinian leaders to organise themselves.

The early years of the British occupation saw a continuation of the struggle for power among the notables. The most enduring and damaging split was that which involved the Husaynis and Nashashibis.¹⁰ This split was symptomatic of the effects of patrician politics which caused the "formation of two or more coalitions roughly balancing one another."¹¹ The Nashashibi family traces its establishment in Jerusalem to the fifteenth century. This affluent mercantile landholding family owed its status in the late Ottoman period to Uthman al-Nashashibi, a landowner and member of the Ottoman parliament in 1912, and Raghib al-Nashashibi, chief

10 Lesch, Quandt, p. 17.

11 Albert Hourani, "The Politics of Notables and Ottoman Reform", *Beginnings of Modernisation in the Middle East*, editors William R. Polk, Richard L. Chambers, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 41.

engineer of the Jerusalem district and also a member of the Ottoman parliament in 1914. Raghib would lead his family and supporters throughout the mandate period. The Husaynis settled in Jerusalem in the late fourteenth century. They acquired their wealth through the accumulation of vast tracts of land. The Husayni family held senior posts in the Ottoman administration. They were custodians of the al-Nabi Musa shrine and delegates to the Ottoman parliament as well as administrators in the central government in Istanbul. In addition, the Husaynis dominated the two most important political and religious offices of Jerusalem, namely the office of mayor and mufti.

The first signs of the Husayni-Nashashibi schism during the British occupation occurred at the Third Palestinian Congress held in December 1920. Faisal's kingdom had fallen and the Palestinian Arab leadership recognized that reliance upon the Hashemite King to resist Zionism was no longer feasible. Therefore, the notables convened a congress in Haifa to organise and re-orient their movement. The congress quickly became the focus of power struggles between the Husayni and Nashashibi families. Raghib al-Nashashibi withdrew his supporters from the Congress and the resulting elections for the Arab Executive(AE) in 1920. Musa Kasim al-Husayni was elected President of the AE, quickly making this body a Husayni stronghold. The Nashashibis responded by boycotting subsequent congresses and withdrawing their support for the AE.¹² As resentment grew against Husayni power more families joined the opposition. Certainly this dispute over control of Arab political bodies hindered unity efforts during the first three years of the occupation.

But control of the AE was not the only power struggle in which the notable families engaged. Two other political developments exacerbated political tensions in Palestine. The first was the election of al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni as the Mufti of Jerusalem. The death of Kamil al-Husayni on March 21, 1921 created a flurry of activity in the Husayni and Nashashibi camps. The Husaynis put forth as their candidate al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni while the Nashashibis threw their

¹² Ann Moseley Lesch, *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917-1939, The Frustration of a Nationalist Movement*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 94.

weight behind Shaykh Husam al-Din Jarallah. The results of the elections saw the Nashashibi candidate poll the most votes while al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni finished a distant third. The Husaynis were unwilling to accept this decision. They began a petition campaign which culminated in the British authorities appointing al-Hajj Amin the new Mufti of Jerusalem.

The establishment of the Supreme Muslim Council(SMC) in 1922 placed a further strain on Husayni-Nashashibi relations. The onset of civil government in July 1920 produced a situation whereby Muslim religious affairs were placed under the control of a British official. A situation which saw a Christian controlling Muslim religious affairs did not sit well with the Muslim majority. As a result, the Muslim community demanded and received control over religious affairs through the creation of the SMC. The SMC was set up on January 9, 1922 with al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni as its president. Al-Hajj Amin was not elected unanimously. Raghیب al-Nashashibi and his supporters waged a bitter propaganda campaign to prevent the election of al-Hajj Amin. The AE and SMC represented the dominant political and religious offices in the Arab community. It was obvious to the Nashashibis that Husayni control of these two bodies would make the Husaynis the dominant faction in Palestinian Arab politics. These two bodies represented the dominant political and religious offices in the Arab community.

Nevertheless, the Nashashibis worst fears were realized as the council was eventually dominated and controlled by al-Hajj Amin and quickly became a focus of Husayni power. It has been argued that al-Hajj Amin emerged as "the dominant force without whose consent-if not his direct personal involvement-almost no decision could be taken or carried out."¹³ Nepotism and favoritism had much to do with the Husaynis domination of the SMC.¹⁴

Thus factionalism was a major feature in Palestinian Arab politics. The Husayni and Nashashibi coalitions battled each other for control of the most significant Palestinian Arab bodies. An understanding of the effect of factionalism upon the Palestinian Arab leadership's

13 Uri M. Kupferschmidt, *The Supreme Muslim Council: Islam Under the British Mandate for Palestine*, (New York: Brill, 1987), p. 67.

14 *ibid*, p. 73.

ability to deal with the mandate authorities requires a consideration of British policy from 1920-1923.

British political policy in Palestine was formulated on two levels for most of the mandate period. The British government in London had the last word on all policy decisions. The Palestinian administration was run largely by British officials. At the apex of this structure was the High Commissioner. He was assisted in his decision-making process by an executive council composed of British officials. These British officials headed departments and served as district commissioners with Arabs and Jews staffing lower level positions. The High Commissioner and upper level officials held virtual unlimited power over the Palestinian people.

The British were content with this form of rule and were in no hurry to move toward a more representative government. Evidence supporting this contention is found in the Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill's statements to the Palestinian delegation in March 1921:

The present form of government will continue for many years, and step by step we shall develop representative institutions leading up to full self-government. All of us here will have passed away from the earth and also our children and our children's children before it is fully achieved.¹⁵

While it could be argued that Churchill's statements represented only the views of his government, the evidence suggests that those who were making decisions in London later in the mandate adhered to Churchill's policy of gradualism.

The most that the British were willing to offer before 1922 was an Advisory Council made up of eleven British officials and ten appointed non-officials. The council could present ordinances for discussion. However, the body possessed no legislative or veto power. The Advisory Council was dismissed by the Palestinian Arabs as a mockery of self-government

¹⁵ Bernard Wasserstein, *The British in Palestine: The Mandatory Government and the Arab-Jewish Conflict, 1917-1929*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), p. 97.

which they held was promised to them by the Allies.¹⁶ Some Arab notables did take part. Yet, they were few in number and participated as individuals and not as representatives of the community. Those who did participate did so on the understanding that the council was temporary and would soon be superseded by constitutional organs. In spite of growing factionalism, the Palestinian leadership remained united on its rejection of this council.

This spirit of co-operation among the notables carried into the negotiations with Churchill in 1921-22. The Fourth Palestinian Congress held at the end of May 1921 had elected a delegation which departed for London in the middle of July. The purpose of this delegation was to negotiate with the British for the establishment of a democratic national government.

The evidence seems to suggest that the Palestinian leadership maintained this spirit of co-operation during the long and arduous negotiations with Britain. With the delegation in London Sir Herbert Samuel invited twenty-nine members of the Muslim and Christian Consultative Committee to a meeting in Jerusalem the stated purpose of which was to discuss the impending constitutional proposals being prepared by the British government. Samuel's summons may be considered to be or represented an effort to undermine the position of the Delegation in London.¹⁷ However, the notables refused to be drawn into Samuel's trap and declined his invitation. Samuel's efforts to convene a meeting a month later were equally ineffective. Those Palestinian leaders who were in Palestine stated that it was inappropriate to engage in constitutional discussions as "the Delegation then in London was the body to be consulted on these matters."¹⁸

This cooperation created an atmosphere whereby the Palestinian leaders were able to influence the British to change their policy. Initial proposals by the British centered around the creation of an advisory council with three-quarters of the representatives being elected and the rest being appointed. The Arab delegation was wholly opposed to this British proposal. In the face of

16 Paul Hanna, *British Policy in Palestine*, (Washington: American Council on Public Affairs, 1942), p. 140.

17 A.W. Kayyali, *Palestine: A Modern History*, (London: Croom Helm), p. 103.

18 *ibid*, p. 103.

this united opposition the British came to the realization that they would have to set up a Legislative Council in which a majority of members were representative of the population. "The uncompromising stance of the Arab delegation was the factor influencing them to offer this concession."¹⁹

The Palestinian Arab delegation continued negotiations with the British, holding out for more concessions. The Palestinian delegation was successful in making the legislative council more representative. After months of bargaining the British offered a new proposal. The draft published in February 1922 provided for a body of twenty-six members including eleven officials and fifteen non officials one of whom was to be nominated by the Chamber of Commerce and two by the High Commissioner; the rest would be elected with the proviso that the council contained at least one Christian and one Jew.²⁰ The British were eventually forced to accede to Palestinian demands and eliminated the nominated members reducing the council to twenty-three members with the stipulation that there had to be at least two Christian and two Jewish members.²¹

This proposal fell short of the Palestinian Arab demand for a fully representative legislative council and was rejected by the delegation. These changes reveal that the Palestinian leadership was instrumental in influencing British policy.²² In just one year the aims of British policy evolved from an appointed Advisory Council to a semi-elected Legislative Council. What is equally significant is that the Churchill White Paper of June 1922 enshrined this Legislative Council as an act of British policy. This suggests that, when able to overcome their factionalism the notables were an effective lobby group.

The years from 1923-1929, however, were marked by a factionalism which crippled the nationalist movement. This period witnessed an end to the co-operation that had existed

19 Ychoshua Porath, *The Emergence of the Palestinian-Arab National Movement, 1918-1929, Volume 1*, (London: Frank Cass, 1974), p. 140.

20 Wasserstein, p. 118.

21 Hanna, p. 83.

22 Edward Knox, *The Making of a New Eastern Question: British Palestine Policy and the Making of Israel, 1917-1925*, (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1981), p. 160.

between the Palestinian notables during the first three years of the mandate. Most of the evidence suggests a crystallization of the opposition to the AE and SMC. In November 1923 those forces opposed to the growing Husayni control of the nationalist movement formed the Palestine Arab National Party(PANP) as an expression of their discontent. The leaders of the party were the Nashashibis and the Jerusalem branch of the Dajanis. Their platform was not drastically different from the AE and SMC. The PANP sought the elimination of the Balfour Declaration, curtailment of Jewish immigration and co-operation with the British authorities. Nevertheless, the PANP challenged the Husayni side for control of the nationalist movement. By 1924 the PANP was gaining adherents and reached a level of organization whereby:

a common front of all the members of this camp gradually developed. During the negotiations in late 1924 over the possibility of reaching an agreement between the AE and its rivals, all the factors of the opposition appeared together in united fashion and were represented by a single delegation.²³

This dichotomy temporarily paralyzed the Palestinian leadership's ability to organise itself and to press the British for change. For instance, it took four years from June 1924 to convene the Seventh Palestinian Congress. The reason for the delay was that the opposition refused to participate unless it was on an equal footing with the AE. Opposition elements argued that the AE no longer represented the Palestinian nationalist movement. Thus, the Palestinian Congress could only be initiated under the auspices of a joint committee of the AE and opposition parties. The leadership was unable to develop a satisfactory compromise until 1928.

During this period the Palestinian leadership also engaged in elections for the SMC and the municipalities which had the effect of exacerbating factional tendencies. As early as 1923 the opposition had petitioned the British government to curb the powers of al-Hajj Amin. While the

23 Porath, Volume 1, p. 230.

opposition failed to move the British government to act against al-Hajj Amin, they did experience a degree of success in the elections for the SMC as they had won in the majority of districts. The Mufti's faction won in Jerusalem and the South.²⁴ In any case the election results were invalidated by the High Court of Justice because of legal irregularities. Thus, the final result of the SMC elections was the maintenance of the status quo, and the Palestinian notables continued to expend valuable energy fighting each other instead of the British.

The elections to the municipal councils from March-June 1927 further entrenched the split within the Palestinian Arab leadership. The AE and SMC saw the elections as an opportunity to prove that they were the only leadership of the Palestinian community. The opposition movement concomitantly began a campaign to resist the AE and SMC. The results of the elections were a triumph of the opposition. Of the eight Arab representatives in the Jerusalem municipality (5 Muslims, 3 Christians and 4 Jews), six supporters of the Nashashibi side were elected. The opposition forces won in most municipalities with the exception of Gaza and Majdal.²⁵

Instead of waging a campaign against the British, the notables were fighting amongst themselves. The Palestinian Arab leadership's ability to apply consistent pressure on the British government was handicapped.

In the face of Arab inaction the British had no intention of reviving any Legislative Council scheme. The Colonial Secretary Lord Devonshire in a cable to Herbert Samuel expressed His Majesty's Government's position:

H.M.G.'s object is to make clear that they have for their part said their last word and that in the face of repeated Arab rejections they do not propose to renew their offer. Further overtures, if any, towards co-operation must not come from us but from Arabs.²⁶

24 Kupferschmidt, p. 28-37.

25 Porath, Volume 1, p. 240.

26 Wasserstein, p. 130.

The Palestinian Arab leadership was unable to organise and therefore allowed the British to do as they pleased with political policy.

Unquestionably, the British government "was committed to a policy of 'immobilism'."²⁷ They made no efforts to initiate any Legislative Council schemes. London was more than willing to defer to the judgement of the new High Commissioner Lord Plumer who was content to maintain the status quo. He argued that it would be "prejudicial to the interests of the people of Palestine as a whole to attempt to introduce any form of representative government at the present time or for some little time to come."²⁸ As the ESCO Foundation asserts:

In politics, {Plumer} 'let sleeping dogs lie', quite satisfied to rule the country with the aid of the Advisory Council made up of official members. In the 1928 report on the administration of the country he laconically stated: 'No steps have been taken to set up a representative legislature.'²⁹

The most that Plumer was willing to concede was municipal elections. He issued a statement of policy which stated that participation in these elections would act as an impetus for further moves toward constitutional government.

The end of 1928 saw the formal reunification of the Palestinian Arab leadership. The Seventh Palestinian Arab Congress was finally convened in Jerusalem. The Congress was attended by three hundred delegates who elected an enlarged Executive of forty eight members, double the previous committee. Musa Kazim al-Husayni was again elected President. The Nashashibi and Husayni factions were represented in approximately equal proportions.³⁰

27 Kayyali, p. 95.

28 *ibid*, p. 153.

29 ESCO, *Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Policies, Volume 1*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 295.

30 ESCO, Volume 1, p. 487.

No longer did the leadership make participation in a legislative council contingent upon the British government's repudiation of the Balfour Declaration. The Arab leaders decided on a new tack to focus their demands on the right of representative government and to utilize the establishment of a legislature as a means of abrogating the Balfour Declaration. This approach showed a growing maturity on the part of the leadership as they realized that boycott was useless.

More importantly, it seems that by 1928 a spirit of co-operation had reasserted itself. The most conspicuous example of this was the agreement by the leaders of the Husayni and Nashashibi factions to participate on a new Legislative Council. The leaders of the two most important factions of the Palestinian leadership signed an agreement with the new High Commissioner Sir John Chancellor in late 1928. The Wailing Wall riots of 1929, however, put at least a temporary halt to any further talks of a Legislative Council. This willingness to co-operate was discerned by the British as the critical element which was needed for initiatives toward self-government to be re-started. By coming together and signing an agreement the notables brought the British back to the negotiating table. The British could no longer delay their implementation of a Legislative Council.

The first ten years of British rule in Palestine witnessed moments of unity and factionalism. The Palestinian leaders showed that when united they could effect positive change on British policy. The success of the notables in achieving a commitment to a semi-elected Legislative Council enshrined in a British White Paper offers but one instance of the ability of the Palestinian leadership to effect change. However, it is equally apparent that when the notables fought amongst themselves their ability to effect change was severely hampered. By expending the majority of their energies on struggles over the control of the SMC and the municipalities the Palestinian leadership allowed the British to maintain the status quo. Yet, by late 1928 we see a renewed spirit of co-operation. The notables came together and opened negotiations for a new Legislative Council which had lapsed since 1923. This was significant as it ensured that the British would finally be forced to act and change political policy.

The Wailing Wall riots in 1929 put an end to negotiations with the British. However, the notables were able to maintain unity and re-open negotiations in 1930. A delegation, which represented the most authoritative spokesman for the political factions, was dispatched to London.³¹ The Palestinian leadership pressed for a government responsible to a representative council. The British refused and the negotiations ended after two short months.

Yet, one important development occurred as a result of these negotiations. The Passfield White Paper reiterated the British government's commitment to establishing a Legislative Council.³² This statement of support was extremely significant since, though the 1922 White Paper proposed the creation of a Legislative Council, the Palestinians' refusal to participate in it gave the British the opportunity to remain inactive on this front. The Palestinian delegation's unity on the issue of participation in such a legislative council in 1930 forced the British to negotiate a new constitutional proposal. Again, a unified Palestinian leadership was capable of influencing British policy.

Unfortunately for the Palestinian people their leaders were unable to maintain this spirit of co-operation. The 1930s saw a continuation of the Nashashibi-led opposition's propaganda campaign to lessen the power of al-Hajj Amin. The Husaynis fought back engaging in a bitter struggle which left deep scars and hatred on both sides. This smear campaign on the part of both the Husaynis and Nashashibis took on wider dimensions as the Mufti prepared to convene the General Islamic Congress in 1931. Prominent members of the opposition travelled around the countryside attacking the Mufti and SMC for holding the Congress in such a partisan way that none of the opposition elements were included.

By December 1931, we see once again an emerging opposition developing an umbrella organization to co-ordinate the Nashashibi's newest attacks on the Husayni faction. In December 1931 the Congress of the Palestinian Muslim Nation held in Jerusalem brought together all

31 Lesch, p. 168.

32 *Statement of Policy Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament(White Paper)*, (London: HMSO, 1930), p. 13.

elements who had opposed the President of the SMC. It succeeded in establishing a united body which included the Nashashibis, Khalidis and Dajanis of Jerusalem, the opposition elements from Nablus, Acre, Haifa, Jaffa and Gaza as well as important rural leaders from the Jerusalem area.³³ The Congress passed resolutions which sought reform of the SMC and a substantial diminution of al-Hajj Amin's powers. The opposition elements were unsuccessful in undercutting the Mufti's control of the SMC. In July 1933 Raghīb al-Nashashibi resigned as its President and the organization slipped into oblivion.

Partisan rivalries continued unabated after 1933. The death of Musa Kazim al-Husayni in 1934 produced more factionalism in the Palestinian leadership. This became apparent with the municipal elections held in 1934. Shifting alliances between the Husaynis and Nashashibis produced an all out struggle for power. The Khalidis and Husaynis made common cause and successfully replaced Raghīb al-Nashashibi with Dr. Husayn Khalidi as mayor of Jerusalem. This was a severe blow to the opposition as the mayoralty of Jerusalem was a major locus of power. The municipal elections had produced much competition among the notable families and resulted in a proliferation of political parties.

Still stinging from their betrayal by the Khalidis, on December 2, 1934, the Nashashibis formed the National Defence Party. The Husaynis responded by forming the Palestine Arab National Party on March 17, 1935. These were the two most important parties in the nationalist movement. However, two more organizations appeared which served primarily as local bases for individual politicians. The Reform Party was created in the latter part of 1935 under the leadership of Dr. Husayn Khalidi. The last party to be established was the National Bloc under Abd al-Latif Salah, a lawyer from Nablus and former member of the SMC. Add to this the Istiqlal Party which was formed in 1932 and one can see the potential for divisiveness.

In light of this factionalism the Palestinian leaders were no closer to a Legislative Council by 1935. Such factional disputes blunted the impact of any pressure the Palestinians were able to

33 Lesch, p. 58.

put on the British to implement a Legislative Council scheme, and it was manifestly apparent that only consistent pressure would force the British to act.

No attempt was made on the part of London after the 1931 White Paper to implement the constitutional proposals. The efforts of the High Commissioner Sir John Chancellor in May 1931 met with a very cool response from the Colonial Secretary. Chancellor's tenure of office came to an end with no action. The new Colonial Secretary Sir P. Cunliffe-Lister and the new High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope were saddled with the 1930 Statement of Policy. Their efforts to move away from the "authoritarian government by fiat were equally ineffective."³⁴ Delay and immobilism became the lynchpin of British policy. The Colonial Secretary and the High Commissioner endorsed the view that any elections for a Legislative Council would be deferred for at least a year and a half. It was agreed on April 20, 1932 that government policy favored the introduction of local self-government for Palestine. The holding of municipal elections would come first, to be followed later by elections to a national Legislative Council.

The argument that municipal elections must be held first was simply a tactic of delay as local government had been allocated to the Palestine people in the 1920s. Delays became commonplace. It was only in 1935 that the British finally acted upon their plan to introduce a Legislative Council.

Clearly then, factionalism was not the only obstacle blocking the notables' pursuit of a Legislative Council. Although they did involve themselves in factional disputes the notables were, from 1930 onward, united in the objective of securing a Legislative Council. There is evidence to suggest that there was substantial support for a Legislative Council among the notables. The Arab reaction to the 1930 White Paper constitutional proposals was generally positive. The Nashashibi side wholeheartedly accepted the Legislative Council. The Husaynis called for a government responsible to a representative council. However, this stand was only a bargaining position in

34 Richard Verdery, "Arab "Disturbances" and the Commissions of Inquiry", *The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, editor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 296.

order to win more concessions and powers for the council.³⁵ In some quarters preparations were made for possible elections to the council signifying acceptance of the constitutional proposals. Furthermore, the Palestinian leadership's response to Sir Arthur Wauchope's plans to set up a Legislative Council in 1932 were equally positive. Wauchope's statements to the Permanent Mandates Commission were welcomed by the leaders of the major factions within the Palestinian leadership.³⁶ The question which comes to mind is why in the face of this support did the British not proceed earlier with a Legislative Council scheme?

The answer to this question is found in the report of the Peel Commission(1937). The Peel Commission rightly pointed out that in any form of self-government a certain degree of homogeneity was required. There did not exist enough common ground between the Arab and Jewish communities to enable a minority to acquiesce to the rule of the majority. As Peel stated "the working basis of parliamentary government or democracy as we understand it is not there."³⁷ As a result, "real 'self-governing institutions' cannot be developed..."³⁸ There would be no truly representative government in Palestine. The Commission argued that "in the present state of affairs" the government could not "abandon" the 400,000 Jews in Palestine "to the good intentions of an Arab government."³⁹ The Commission recommended that if the mandate had to continue it should be governed along the lines of the present political arrangement. Maintenance of a Crown Colony type of government would ensure the safeguarding of the Jewish National Home.

The Balfour Declaration had saddled the British government with what Peel called an "irrepressible conflict."⁴⁰ The British had to figure out how to establish self-governing

35 Yehoshua Porath, *The Palestinian-Arab National Movement: From Riots to Rebellion, 1929-1939*, Volume 2, (London: Frank Cass, 1977), p. 144.

36 *ibid*, p. 147.

37 *Report of the Palestine Royal Commission(Peel Commission)*, (London: HMSO, 1937), p. 361.

38 *ibid*, p. 362.

39 *ibid*, p. 375.

40 *ibid*, p. 370.

institutions in a unitary state with two mutually antagonistic populations. It was an impossible task and caused the British to remain idle on constitutional matters.

In this light, it is questionable whether even the most concerted efforts on the part of a fully unified Palestinian leadership would have been sufficient to force the British to form a Legislative Council. Though the Palestinian leadership was torn by factional rivalry, the fact remains that there was basic unity on the issue of an elected Legislative Council.

The years 1935 and 1936 witnessed the final two times that the Palestinian leadership could put its differences aside and challenge the British government. By November 25, 1935 a coalition of parties (excluding the Istiqlal) formed the National Front and petitioned the British government for a Legislative Council. They were successful as the British offered a council in late 1935. The High Commissioner with the permission of the London government presented a Legislative Council proposal to both the Jewish and Palestinian Arab leaders on December 22, 1935. The Legislative Council was to consist of 28 members, 5 government officials, 2 nominated representatives of commerce, 8 elected and 3 nominated Muslims, 3 elected and 4 nominated Jews, 1 elected and 2 nominated Christians.⁴¹ This council was restrictive also in the sense that the validity of the Mandate could not be questioned. As well the High Commissioner maintained the power of veto as well as authority to enact laws in situations when the Council failed to pass necessary legislation. The Legislative Council would be limited to dealing with issues that did not threaten the Jewish National Home.

The National Defence Party, Reform Party and National Bloc gave unconditional support for the scheme.⁴² The Husayni dominated PAP were non-committal in their response but their reserved attitude toward the Legislative Council did not kill the proposal. The Colonial Office was aware of the positive Arab response as the head of the Middle East Department Sir C. Parkinson suggested :

41 ESCO, *Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Policies, Volume 2*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1947), p. 785.

42 Porath, Volume 2, pp. 151-153.

the Arab reaction is such that the Government certainly should proceed with its proposals. It is true...that some of the Arab leaders quite frankly regard the Government proposals as an 'installment' and will press, in due course, for more power for the legislative council. But that is no reason why we should not proceed with the present proposals.⁴³

The Palestine Royal Commission reiterated the acceptance of the legislative council by the Palestinian leadership: "While they subjected the proposals for a Legislative Council to a varying degree of criticism, none rejected them outright."⁴⁴ These findings bring into question certain scholarly opinions that characterize the policy of the notables solely as self-defeating negativism.⁴⁵ Yet, there is evidence to suggest that since 1928 the notables were unified on the prospect of some type of self-governing body. Their actions, especially in 1935, show a willingness to participate in any constitutional scheme.

The success on the part of the Palestinian National Front in 1935 provides yet another example of the Palestinian leadership's capacity to effect change when sufficiently united. Thus, one can see another example of co-operation and the positive change which the Palestinian leadership could effect when united. Admittedly, the Palestinians, had little influence on the negotiations as the Legislative Council provisions were no better than those offered in 1922. Regardless, the Palestinian leadership had secured a Legislative Council. Nor should the leadership's achievement be diminished by the fact that the British parliament eventually voted down the proposals for a Legislative Council.

The Palestinian leadership were able to muster one final act of unity in late 1936. The violence which erupted in April 1936 occurred without the consent or knowledge of the

43 *ibid*, p. 154.

44 ESCO, Volume 2, p. 786.

45 Verdery, p. 285.

Palestinian leadership. The Mufti waited ten days after the strikes began before assuming the leadership of the movement.⁴⁶ Raghīb al-Nashashībī the most influential leader in Palestine next to the Mufti stressed that "the disturbances were quite unexpected" and that the people "at the present time were ruling the leaders and not the leaders ruling the people."⁴⁷ The High Commissioner, writing in October 1936, ascertained that "the strike was begun independently and spontaneously...by various committees...who on the 20 and 21 April issued calls for a strike."⁴⁸

With the formation of the Arab Higher Committee in 1936 the urban notables continued to be pulled along by the force of events which were occurring at the local level. On a day-to-day level, the strike was directed by the local national committees which were loosely co-ordinated allocating limited influence to the AHC. In the end, however, the AHC was able to muster enough influence to terminate the strike. In this way the urban notables demonstrated their influence over the course of events in Palestine.

What is equally apparent is that the events which were occurring in Palestine propelled the urban notables to even greater efforts of unity. The creation of the AHC was more comprehensive than the previous National Front as it included leaders from every political party including the Istiqlalists and the Christian community.⁴⁹ The organization's cohesion throughout the strike was noteworthy.

The formation of the AHC in 1936 allowed the Palestinian leadership to control the strike enough to ensure that negotiation with the British in the future was possible. The major objective of al-Hajj Amin and the AHC was to negotiate with the Royal Commission which had been promised by the British government. As leader of the Palestinian community the Mufti realized that the British would not negotiate in an atmosphere of revolt. Instead they would declare martial

46 Phillip Mattar, *The Mufti of Jerusalem: Al-Hajj Amin and the Palestinian National Movement*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), pp. 69-70.

47 Tom Bowden, "The Politics of the Arab Rebellion in Palestine, 1936-1939", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 11(1975), p. 169.

48 *ibid*, p. 169.

49 Barbara Kalkas, "The Revolt of 1936: A Chronicle of Events", *The Transformation of Palestine: Essays on the Origin and Development of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, editor Ibrahim Abu Lughod, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1971), p. 245.

law and put down resistance through military means. It was therefore imperative to control this mobilisation from below as much as possible while seeking a peaceful solution with the British authorities. By establishing the AHC the Palestinian leadership presented a united negotiating body which the British could not ignore as the Peel Commission quickly recognized:

All the political parties presented a 'common front' and their leaders sit together on the Arab Higher Committee. Christians as well as Muslims are represented on it...in every town there is a National Committee, which has representatives in the neighbouring villages. Arab unity was manifest by the fact that as long as the Arab Higher Committee maintained a boycott no Arab came near us.⁵⁰

The AHC articulated the view that an irreconcilable conflict existed between the Jewish population and themselves making the mandate unworkable. The British government accepted this interpretation as new policy. The fact that this policy statement did not lead to the nullification of the Jewish National Home should not diminish the achievement. The Palestinian Arab leaders were successful in gaining a statement of policy which had the potential to eliminate the provisions of the Balfour Declaration.

In conclusion, the Palestinian leaders effected positive change on British policy when they were able to control their internecine conflicts. The first sixteen years of the mandate witnessed sporadic episodes of unity which usually ended in a positive change of British political policy for the Palestinian Arabs. However, the Palestinian leadership was unable to sustain consistent unity efforts. Moreover, a consistent campaign of pressure was needed to force the British to implement some sort of representative government. The impossibility of developing a satisfactory constitutional scheme for both the Jews and Arabs caused the British to adhere to a policy of

50 Peel Commission, p. 132.

immobilism. The inconsistent efforts of the Palestinian leadership were not enough to coerce the British to enact a Legislative Council before 1936.

Chapter II

THE END OF PALESTINIAN UNITY AND THE TRIUMPH OF BRITISH POLICY (1937-1948)

The final eleven years of the British mandate have been characterized by historians as a time of intense factionalism. This Chapter will analyse the effects of this factionalism on the ability of the Palestinian leaders to obtain a constitutional government, keeping in mind the role which British policy played in hindering the notables' efforts in this regard. The contention of mainstream historians, that the notables were unable to cooperate in coercing the British to implement the constitutional proposals of the 1939 White Paper, is not being disputed. It is proposed here that the White Paper's constitutional proposals slipped into oblivion because the British policy of immobilism had not changed. This assertion calls into question those historical interpretations which suggest that somehow the urban notables missed a glorious opportunity for statehood. Moreover, there is no question that through their factionalism the Palestinian notables effectively relinquished control of their nationalist movement, their position being assumed by the leaders of other Arab states. It is suggested here that by this time any action on the part of the notables was irrelevant. The Palestinian problem had become an international issue relegating the notables to a position whereby they could not influence the outcome of the Palestinian problem. The overriding influence of British policy had as much to do with the unsuccessful attempts by the notables to obtain self-governing institutions as their inability to organise.

The second phase of the rebellion(1937-1939) so fractured the unity of the Palestinian leaders that they would never recover their cohesion. British efforts to alleviate Arab grievances through the Peel Commission met with little success. British plans to solve the Palestinian-Zionist impasse through partition were greeted by the Palestinians with bitter refusal and condemnation. The inadequacy of British policy touched off the second and most violent phase of the Arab rebellion. Uprisings began to occur everywhere in Palestine. The second phase was more

spontaneous and less organised with rebel bands virtually independent in their actions.⁵¹ The Palestinian leaders lost control of the rebellion and anarchy became the norm.

It is important to note that the reason that anarchy occurred was because the revolt was not simply aimed at the Zionist and British occupiers. As the Peel Commission asserted, "the novelty" of the conflict was the attacks which were perpetrated "by Arabs on Arabs".⁵² The peasantry inflicted violence on the urban notables as they viewed the landholding class as being responsible for their plight. A criminal element was also present in the rebellion as marginal leaders of the rebel bands wreaked havoc. However, the most damaging Arab violence was that which occurred between the Palestinian leaders themselves.

The major dichotomy was the traditional Husayni-Nashashibi split. The year 1937 was a turning-point for the Mufti. He was bitterly disappointed with the partition proposal. This was coupled with more aggressive measures by the British government in curtailing the revolt. The murder of Lewis Andrews the acting District Commissioner of Galilee caused the British to embark on a policy of firm military measures. The Mufti abandoned his moderate policies after witnessing the destruction which British counter measures had on the Palestinian people.⁵³ The British attempt to arrest him resulted in his flight to Damascus. From Syria the Mufti launched a campaign of terror and assassination aimed at the Nashashibis and their supporters. The Mufti's disaffection with the Nashashibi side reached its breaking point with the withdrawal of the National Defence Party from the HAC four days before the publication of the Peel Commission findings. Raghib al-Nashashibi's move was tactical. He sought flexibility so that if partition did occur his party would emerge as leader in a Palestinian entity which was controlled by Amir Abdullah of TransJordan. This alliance with the Hashemites would eventually pay dividends for the Nashashibis but not in 1937. A Massive public outcry forced the Nashashibis to reject partition, thereby maintaining a facade of unity in the Arab camp.

51 Kenneth Stein, "The Intifada and the 1936-1939 Uprising: A Comparison", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol XIX, no. 4 (Summer 1990), p. 73.

52 Peel Commission, p. 135.

53 Mattar, p. 78.

This campaign of terror saw the assassination of prominent members of the National Defence Party such as Dr. Taha Hasan Hanun and Abd al-Salam Barkawi.⁵⁴ Those that were not killed left the country for the safe confines of Cairo and Beirut. In response to the violence the opposition formed Peace Bands and worked with the British to restore order and offset the Mufti's terror. Instead of directing their military efforts against the Zionist and British occupiers the Palestinian leadership organised to fight each other. This dispute did irreversible damage to the unity of the Palestinian leadership.

Cooperation between the Husayni and Nashashibis became impossible. This was evident as the notables prepared to send a delegation to London in 1938. The first hurdle which the Palestinian leadership had to overcome was the issue of al-Hajj Amin. Although he was the undisputed leader of the Palestinian community, the British forbade the Mufti from coming to London as they held him responsible for a large part of the violence. This controversy was solved by electing al-Hajj Amin as the nominal head of the delegation but he remained behind in Beirut on a voluntary basis. The problem of resolving the Husayni-Nashashibi split was more complicated.

The reason was that the Mufti issued a manifesto shortly after the announcement of the London Conference which stated that the Higher Arab Committee was the only body which could represent the Palestinian people in London. Raghīb al-Nashashibi launched a campaign of his own from Cairo, lobbying for the inclusion of his party in the delegation, and demanding the chairmanship for himself. No compromise was worked out. Both sides sent separate delegations to the conference. In London the intransigence of both parties remained firm. The crux of the problem was, as Sir Miles Lampson reported not a question of policy but "a feud between the two families..."⁵⁵ This became apparent as the British intervened to secure a unified delegation. Jamal al-Husayni, the Mufti's representative, argued the Nashashibi delegation should be excluded as they were "regarded by the people of Palestine as having stabbed the nation in the

54 Nasser Edin Nashashibi, *Jerusalem's Other Voice: Raghīb Nashashibi and Moderation in Palestinian Politics, 1920-1948*, (Exeter: Ithaca Press, 1990), p. 56.

55 Nashashibi, p. 155.

back."⁵⁶ Raghīb al-Nashashībī was equally adamant in his exclusion of the Husaynis which he referred to as "abettors in accessories to murder."⁵⁷

The Colonial Office was able to persuade the AHC to accept the two Nashashībī representatives, Raghīb al-Nashashībī and Ya'coub Effendi Faraj. This was achieved after the British threatened to negotiate with both delegations. The result of this dispute was a delegation which was divided by hatred. As a result, the Nashashībīs took no part in consultation with the HAC. The delegation was unable to accomplish anything. Factionalism had rendered the delegation impotent. The Palestinian leadership had no influence on the 1939 White Paper.

The change in British policy came about as a result of the changing international situation. Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia and his aggressive movements in Libya had sent shock waves through the Foreign Office in London. The increasing Nazi and Japanese threat meant an overall reassessment of Britain's Mediterranean policy. The logistics of this policy need not concern us here.⁵⁸ Suffice it to say that London foresaw a change to the policy of self sufficiency in the Middle East. The linchpins of this policy were the Arab states. The White Paper was an act of appeasement specifically aimed at gaining the goodwill of the Arab rulers. The Arab states had become more important in Britain's strategic objectives.⁵⁹

As the international situation continued to worsen, British policy in Palestine was seen as directly affecting relations with the Arab powers. British policy began to focus on taking measures which would render Arab public opinion sympathetic to her in the event of war. The Arab states had to be brought on side as they were perceived as a military threat to British interests in the Middle East. Conversely the Jewish community presented a limited military challenge to Britain. British statesmen made a cold assessment of the realities of war. As the Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain asserted, the Palestinian problem had to be assessed with a "view of its effects on the

56 ibid, p. 156.

57 ibid, p. 158.

58 Michael Cohen, "British Strategy and the Palestine Question: 1936-1939", *Journal of Contemporary History*, 7(July-October, 1972), 57-84.

59 Michael Cohen, "Appeasement in the Middle East: The British White Paper on Palestine, May 1939", *The Historical Journal*, vol xvi, no. 3 (1973), p. 577.

international situation...if we must offend one side, let us offend the Jews rather than the Arabs."⁶⁰

Consequently, the negotiations which were convened by the British on February 7, 1939 were not the result of the lobbying efforts of the Palestinian Arab leadership. The St. James Conference was initiated by the British with the specific intention of placating the Arab states. The British government understood that an agreement was unlikely as both sides were diametrically opposed to each other.⁶¹ Once the Government was certain that the Arab states would not rebel against British proposals it had no further use for serious discussion with either the Jews or the Palestinian Arabs.⁶²

Thus, it would seem that the Palestinian Arab population's greatest political victory was not the result of pressure by their leaders. The Palestinian delegation was a non-factor in negotiations. Internecine conflicts took precedence over unity. To make matters worse the Higher Arab Committee rejected the British act of policy. The White Paper stated that His Majesty's Government sought to establish within ten years an independent Palestine in treaty relations with Britain. The shape of the Palestinian state would be one in which Arabs and Jews shared in government.⁶³ The British government stipulated that a transitional period would be needed during which Palestinians would take on increased participation in government. Palestinians would be placed in charge of certain departments with British advisors. These Palestinian heads of Departments would be expected to sit on an Executive Council which would advise the High Commissioner. The number of Palestinians in charge of departments would be increased until all British officials had been replaced. At this stage the British foresaw a conversion of the Executive into a Council of Ministers.⁶⁴

60 *ibid*, p. 591.

61 Michael Cohen, *Palestine: Retreat from the Mandate: The Making of British Policy, 1936-1945*, (New York Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1978), pp. 72-88.

62 *ibid*, p. 87.

63 *Statement of Policy Presented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Parliament (White Paper)*, (London: HMSO, 1939).

64 *ibid*.

Rejection by the AHC did not mean that the White Paper was not open for negotiation. For instance, Jamal al-Husayni, with the help of Nuri Said arranged a meeting with Colonel S.F. Newcombe, who had been sent by the new British Colonial Secretary Lord Lloyd in July 1940. The fall of France had refocused Nazi aggression on Britain. The Colonial Office was anxious to secure Arab support through acceptance of the White Paper.⁶⁵ Jamal al-Husayni pressed for the implementation of the provisions which were outlined in paragraph 10(4) of the White Paper (Hheads of Departments). In return Jamal offered to terminate the anti-British propaganda which had been emanating from the Husayni camp. Jamal al-Husayni went as far as initialling the White Paper. Although the Mufti was incensed by his cousin's unilateral action he eventually "gave his reluctant consent" to the agreement.⁶⁶ Newcombe possessed no power to negotiate on behalf of the British government let alone ensure the implementation of the constitutional proposals. The agreement was therefore nullified by London's refusal to negotiate.

Nevertheless, the Husaynis did make an attempt to have constitutional proposals implemented. Their influence was limited. The Mufti and his supporters by the summer of 1940 had become "sworn" enemies of His Majesty's Government.⁶⁷ If change was going to occur it would have to come from the moderate leaders.

Issa Khalaf has identified a moderate wing of the Husayni dominated HAC. Awni Abd al-Hadi, leader of the Istiqlal Party, Ahmad Hilmi Pasha, Pasha Abd -al-Baqi, head of the Arab Bank, Ya'qub al-Ghusayn, head of the Young Men's Youth Congress, Abd al-Latif Salah, leader of the National Bloc, Dr. Husayn Fakhri al-Khalidi, former mayor of Jerusalem and leader of the Reform Party, Fuad Saba, a Christian Arab from Jerusalem and former secretary to the AHC, and George Antonious were all in favor of implementing the White Paper.⁶⁸ Throughout 1939 and 1940 these Palestinian moderates repeatedly attempted to gain clarification of the British

65 Joseph Nevo, "Al-Hajj Amin and the British in World War II", *Middle Eastern Studies*, vol 20, no. 1 (January 1984), p. 9.

66 *ibid*, p. 9.

67 *ibid*, p. 9.

68 Khalaf, p. 24..

constitutional proposals.⁶⁹ The British were circumspect in their relations with these men. Although not rejecting the constitutional proposals outright, the British refused to change the status quo. As a result, this coalition of moderates was unsuccessful in propelling the British to change political policy.

The Nashashibi camp also made a bid to have the constitutional proposals implemented. From the beginning the Nashashibis and their supporters accepted the White Paper provisions. Sulayman Tuqan, Shukri Taji and Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Muzattar, all wealthy urban landowners and Nashashibi supporters, commenced negotiations with the British Minister to TransJordan Sir Alec Kirkbride in June 1940.⁷⁰ The three submitted a program which called for the appointment of Palestinians to head government departments.

London's response was once again vague. While the Colonial Secretary Lord Lloyd encouraged the idea of having contact with these notables he suggested to High Commissioner MacMichael that he could establish an Arab advisory committee as a provisional measure.⁷¹ The committee would have no official status or powers. The government never instituted this body.

Thus, there is evidence to suggest that there was support from the Palestinian leadership for the constitutional proposals of the White Paper. Moreover, the Palestinian leaders were active, although in an ineffective way, in lobbying the British to implement the constitutional proposals during the first three years of World War II. As a result, this thesis questions Cohen's assertions that the period was marked by the "almost absolute absence of domestic Palestinian agitation."⁷² The British could have implemented some of the proposals, as a substantial number of the Palestinian leaders had been allowed to return to their country by 1941.⁷³ By 1945 the British had not implemented even the most rudimentary constitutional provisions. Why were no provisions implemented? It is apparent that Arab rejection is not the only reason why no provisions were

69 ibid, p. 76.

70 ibid, p. 80.

71 ibid, pp. 82-83

72 Cohen, *Retreat from the Mandate*, p. 88.

73 Hurewitz, p. 116.

implemented as a substantial amount of support for the White Paper existed among the Palestinian leadership. A more complete answer lies in the Prime Minister's office.

Initially there was support from British politicians for the constitutional scheme. A group of Ministers headed by the Foreign Secretary Lord Halifax and the Colonial Secretary Malcolm MacDonald pressed for the immediate implementation of the constitutional proposals.⁷⁴ By February 1940 most of the moderate Palestinian leaders had returned or were returning to Palestine. The Foreign and Colonial offices concluded that it was time to act on the "Heads of Departments" scheme as it was called. Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty in Neville Chamberlain's Cabinet, led the opposition to the Colonial and Foreign Offices. Contrary to what the Colonial and Foreign Offices wanted, a "modus vivendi" at the Cabinet level was reached on the provisions concerning the White Paper.⁷⁵ That is, the immigration and land clauses of the White Paper would be zealously enforced while the constitutional clauses would not be implemented, at least not until the cessation of hostilities. Churchill's hand was strengthened with his assumption of power in May 1940. His Cabinet was augmented by the addition of the Labor and Liberal parties. These two parties had declared in 1939 that they refused to consider themselves bound by the policy of the White Paper in any future government that they might form.⁷⁶

The war continued to go badly in early 1941, prompting the Colonial and Foreign Offices to pressure Churchill to implement the Heads of Departments scheme. The Churchill government's response was deliberately negative: "The policy of His Majesty's Government for Palestine was clearly laid down in May 1939, and has not been changed..."⁷⁷ Churchill was determined to ensure that no movement on the constitutional proposals occur. He was successful. Any attempts on the part of the moderate Palestinian leadership at instituting Section 10(4) of the

74 Gavriel Cohen, *Churchill and Palestine, 1939-1942*, (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben Zvi, 1976), p. 11.

75 Ronald Zweig, *Britain and Palestine During the Second World War*, (London: The Royal Historical Society University College, 1986), p. 19.

76 *ibid*, p. 5.

77 *ibid*, p. 40.

White Paper met with complete resistance from the Prime Minister and his government. The most that the Churchill government was willing to acquiesce to was an Advisory Committee. In truth, by 1941 the question of constitutional progress had been shelved.⁷⁸

While the White Paper remained the official policy of the British government, it was apparent to British politicians in both London and Palestine that by 1945 the White Paper of 1939 had become "a hollow shell."⁷⁹ By the beginning of 1943 both the Colonial and Foreign Offices had agreed that the White Paper's constitutional provisions were null and void and had to be replaced.⁸⁰ As a result, the British began to look at various partition schemes to solve the Palestine problem.⁸¹ These proposals were never implemented and generally did not make it past the negotiating stage.

The point being made here is that nothing had changed since the inception of the Balfour Declaration in 1917. The primary purpose of the mandate continued to be the establishment of a Jewish National Home. The full implementation of the White Paper's constitutional proposals would have dealt a death blow to this objective. Those who had the last say on policy in Palestine were not prepared to allow an Arab state to eliminate the Jewish National Home.

Thus, British policy had considerable impact upon the failure of the White Paper's constitutional proposals. Although the Palestinian leaders were badly divided they continued to agree on the need for some sort of constitutional scheme. In any occupier-elite relationship the occupying power must be willing to allow the indigenous elite a degree of control over their internal administration. The fundamental element of control for any elite is control of government. The British were never able to develop a satisfactory constitutional arrangement which would allow increasing Palestinian Arab involvement in government while protecting the Jewish National Home. Therefore, they could not act on even the most rudimentary constitutional proposals. Seen

78 *ibid*, p. 40.

79 *ibid*, p. 176.

80 *ibid*, p. 168.

81 Khalaf, pp. 104-108, Zweig, 89-115.

from this perspective, the fact that the Palestinian leaders could not organise almost becomes inconsequential. British policy during the war years was committed to firmly enforcing the immigration and land provisions while remaining immobile in the area of constitutional concessions to the Arab elite. This analysis questions Cohen's argument which suggests that Palestinian inaction resulted in a series of "missed opportunities."⁸² The point is there were no opportunities.

That is not to say that the Palestinian leadership did not bear responsibility for allowing the constitutional proposals to lapse. Co-operation among this leadership was prerequisite to the application of constant pressure on the British throughout the entire war period. Such pressure might have caused the British to make "minor" concessions. However, the notables were unable to unify during the war years.

As has already been shown the 1939-42 period saw no co-ordination of resistance by the Palestinian leaders. This was partially the result of the British policy of deportation and exile. The dispersion of Palestinian leaders throughout the Middle East made unity impossible and left Palestine leaderless. However, what was equally apparent was that the damaging effects of the Arab revolt had not worn off. The Husaynis refused to come to terms with any of the factions who did not embrace their extremist ideology.

The two year period after 1943 saw a continuation of these factional problems. The only difference was the Husayni-Nashashibi split became secondary to the emerging Husayni-Istiqlal split. This new cleavage was as damaging as the Husayni-Nashashibi conflict had been.⁸³ The Istiqlal Party re-emerged in the summer of 1943. Government restraints on political action had been lifted as the threat of defeat had passed. It was in this new found freedom of expression that three Istiqlal leaders attempted to re-unify the Palestinian leadership. Rashid al-Hajj Ibrahim, Awni Abd al-Hadi and Ahmad Hilmi Pasha began a series of private discussions with the aim of

82 Cohen, *Retreat from the Mandate*, p. 188.

1 Joseph Nevo, "The Renewal of Palestinian Political Activity 1943-1945: The Shifting of the Pivot of Dissension from the Husayni-Nashashibi Conflict to the Husayni-Istiqlal Rivalry", *The Palestinians and the Middle East Conflict*, editor Gabriel Ben-Dor (London: Turtledove Publishing, 1976), p. 61.

reforming the AHC. The Istiqlal spokesmen appealed to the leaders of the defunct parties to join them. They met with limited success.

The first real attempts at unification occurred in December 1943. Under the direction of al-Hajj Ibrahim, the Haifa Chamber of Commerce introduced the idea of forming a united political body to represent the Palestinian Arabs. It was decided to convene a general conference which would create an Arab political body by electing an Executive Committee to represent and speak for the Arabs of Palestine.⁸⁴ The conference was attended by thirteen Arab mayors and presidents of the former National Defence and National Bloc parties as well as a number of Istiqlal supporters. The absence of the Husaynis condemned the conference to defeat. Any coalition had to include the Husaynis who refused to countenance the emergence of a nationalist body which was independent from their control.⁸⁵

Face to face negotiations between the Istiqlalists and the Husayni representative Emile al-Ghury achieved no political compromise. Al-Ghury insisted that in spite of the Mufti's and Jamal's absence from Palestine, they had not forfeited the right of leadership. The Husaynis continued a policy of non-cooperation. The Husaynis re-created the Palestine Arab Party on April 28, 1944 nullifying any future unity attempts.

With the exception of an agreement to send Musa Alami to the Arab unity Conference at Alexandria in 1944 and a shortlived Arab Higher Committee formed under the auspices of the Syrian Prime Minister Jamil Mardam, unity efforts were unsuccessful. By the end of the war these two sets of political leaders had allowed the British constitutional proposals to lapse without a fight. As Hurewitz suggests:

The leaders of the six parties took to meeting informally at one another's homes and offices in April 1945 at irregular intervals to discuss local political affairs. This

84 Khalaf, p. 93.

85 Hurewitz, p. 184.

was as close as they came in wartime to forming a new executive for the national movement.⁸⁶

Thus, it seems unlikely that the Palestinian Arab leaders could have forced the British to implement the constitutional provisions. Yet, it was possible that minor concessions could have been wrung from London if sustained pressure was applied by the Palestinian leaders. Disunity prevented even the most minimal pressure especially during the first three years of the war when the British were most vulnerable.

The Palestinian leadership continued to be divided in the post-war era. February 1946 was a time of hope for the Palestinian community. Jamal al-Husayni was released from Southern Rhodesia by the British and allowed to return to Palestine. It was hoped that Jamal al-Husayni's status as a nationalist leader might be strong enough to mold the Higher Committee together. Jamal al-Husayni had other motivations as he sought to make the PAP the dominant party in the HAC. Under pressure from the Mufti who had escaped to France by 1945, Jamal al-Husayni refused to "give due weight to other parties."⁸⁷ He rejected the idea of a rotating chairman and delegates to Arab League sessions. He argued for two PAP men for every one member of the other parties.

The result was yet another split in the Palestinian ranks in March 1946. The AHC was for the most part abandoned by the traditional opposition elements. Raghib al-Nashashibi and Sulyman Tuqan of the NDP, Ya'qub al-Ghusayn the leader of the Youth Congress, Abd al-Latif Salah the leader of the National Bloc, Dr. Husayn al-Khalidi the leader of the Reform Party, Awni Abd al-Hadi the leader of the Istiqlal and Ahmad Hilmi Pasha withdrew from the AHC to form the Arab Higher Front.⁸⁸ Jamal countered by expanding the AHC's membership to twenty-eight members in April 1946.⁸⁹ The result of this conflict was that it "dragged Palestinian politics ever

86 ibid, p. 188.

87 Khalaf, p. 120.

88 ibid, p. 120.

89 ibid, p. 126.

deeper into the quagmire of personalistic rivalries" paralyzing any concerted action on the part of the urban notables.⁹⁰

The urban notables called upon the Arab League to instill some semblance of unity into their movement. In June 1946 at the Bludan Congress in Syria the AHC and AHF were dissolved. A new four man Arab Higher Committee was created with Jamal al-Husayni as vice chairman(the Chairmanship was left open for the Mufti who had returned to Egypt at the end of May) Dr. Husayn al-Khalidi, secretary, Ahmad Hilmi Pasha(Istiqlal) and Emile Ghoury.⁹¹ Thus, the Bludan Conference was a success for the Husaynis as their membership dominated the opposition with a majority of three to two. The Mufti was not satisfied with this power relationship. By January 1947, al-Hajj Amin had expanded the AHC from four members to nine in an effort to enhance his political power. Predictably, the five new leaders were all Husayni supporters.

The opposition was critical of this unilateral move on the part of the Husaynis but there was little they could do. As was the case in 1937-39 the Husaynis did not flinch in their pursuit of power. The use of violence in the form of threats and assassination effectively silenced all critics to the Mufti and Jamal al-Husayni. The opposition representatives "did not present any real alternative out of either indifference or fear" prompting "even the staunch foes of the Husaynis" to admit "that the AHC was indeed the representative body of the Palestine Arabs."⁹²

The failure of the Palestinian leadership to organise during the last three years of the mandate was crucial. Internecine conflicts invited intervention from the Arab States on a consistent basis. Palestine became irrevocably connected to the decisions of the Arab League. The notables relinquished their bargaining position to the Arab states to a point where they were unable to regain it. A cursory look at the Anglo-American Investigations, London Conferences and the United Nations investigations substantiate a fair amount of immobilism on the part of the

90 ibid, p. 123.

91 ibid, p. 123.

92 Joseph Nevo, "The Arabs of Palestine 1947-1948: Military and Political Activity", *Middle Eastern Studies*, 23 (1987), p. 5.

Palestinian leadership. The HAC and opposition elements boycotted the Anglo-American sittings. The same was true for the first London Conference which was convened on September 10, 1946. Although the Arab states attended, the Palestinian leadership did not, arguing that the British exclusion of the Mufti from the delegation meant that they could not proceed to London.⁹³ The second London Conference which opened on January 27, 1947 did include a delegation from the AHC. In conjunction with the Arab states the Palestinians rejected Bevin's proposal of provincial autonomy. The arrival of UNSCOP in the summer of 1947 was greeted by another boycott of investigatory committees by the notables.⁹⁴

The leadership of the Arab States acted as the Palestinian spokesmen in most dealings with the British and Americans from 1945-47. By 1947 the Palestinian leadership became completely subjugated to the Arab League. This became evident at the Aley meetings in Lebanon in October, 1947. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the UNSCOP recommendations. It was indicative of the changed position of the Palestinian leaders was that not one of them was invited.⁹⁵ Notwithstanding this fact, the Mufti attended this meeting with the purpose of lobbying for the establishment of a provisional government in Palestine. The Mufti and his followers were no longer negotiating with the British but the Arab states who were now their representatives to the British and Americans. The Arab League rejected any sort of provisional government.

The Arab League eliminated all Palestinian representation from its decision-making process in the final months of the mandate. The Mufti at the December meeting was barred from attending although he was admitted to preliminary meetings on the first day of the proceedings. Al-Hajj Amin's exclusion was fostered by Iraqi and TransJordanian opposition.⁹⁶ By February 1948, the Mufti and his supporters were completely shut out of the Arab League's decision-making process. Al-Hajj Amin had made both military and political proposals to offset the Zionist

93 Hurewitz, p. 262..

94 Nevo, "The Arabs of Palestine 1947-1948: Military and Political Activity", p. 26.

95 *ibid*, p. 11.

96 Khalaf, p. 188.

threat, all of which were rejected by the Political Committee of the Arab League. As Khalaf suggests:

All decisions from that time forward were monopolised by the League and the Mufti was excluded from any meaningful decision making.-He was no longer regarded as the leader of Palestine and head of a Palestinian political institution, the AHC, which theoretically represented the Palestinian Arabs. He had to adhere to the majority wishes.⁹⁷

Factionalism may have been the single most important reason for the Palestinians' losing control over their nationalist movement to the leaders of the Arab states. In so far as this loss meant that Palestinian interests were not being heard at crucial points in negotiations with Britain, the notables may be said to have failed in their duties as leaders of Arab Palestine. Even if the Palestinian leadership had been united for the last three years of the mandate, it is unlikely that they would have been able to change the outcome in 1948. The Palestine issue became internationalised after 1945 rendering the Palestinian leadership one small element in the game of great power politics. The United States, Britain, the Arab States and the Zionists decided the fate of Palestine.

In conclusion the second stage of the Arab rebellion did irreversible damage to the unity of the Palestinian leadership. At no time during the remaining eleven years of the mandate were the notables able to renew the spirit of cooperation which intermittently existed before 1936. The 1939 White Paper was not the result of sustained pressure by the Palestinian leadership. The changing international situation caused the British to advocate a statement of policy favorable to the Palestinian leadership. The Palestinian leadership failed to act in a concerted fashion on the constitutional proposals during the war period. Certainly this was a failure in leadership.

97 *ibid*, p. 190

However, it is hard to say how much of an impact the notables could have made on British policy if they had been united. Those who were making the decisions in London were opposed to implementation of the constitutional proposals. The passing of the 1939 White Paper was not an opportunity which the Palestinian leadership failed to capitalize on. Factionalism continued to hamper the Palestinian leadership during the last three years of the mandate. The result was that during the final three years of the mandate the notables relinquished control of their movement to the Arab states. While this relinquishment of power revealed the impotence of the Palestinian Arab leadership it was not the only reason the notables failed in their bid for statehood. By 1948, the Palestinian conflict had become internationalized. The notables were one small factor in the Palestinian problem. There was not much the Palestinian leaders could do to change the fate of their country.

Chapter III

THE COOPTATION OF THE NASHASHIBI COLLABORATORS AND DISINTEGRATION OF THE TRADITIONAL PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP AS A POLITICAL FORCE (1948-1967)

The Jordanian period can be separated into two distinct units corresponding to the reigns of Kings Abdullah and Hussein. During the short time that Abdullah ruled, the area of the West Bank was formally annexed and the pattern of relationships between the regime and the notables were established. Abdullah began, and Hussein maintained a policy of selective cooptation of the Palestinian leadership into the Jordanian administration. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the Hashemite policies of cooptation and assess the impact they had on Palestinian efforts to achieve an independent Palestinian state. Unquestionably, the Jordanian period marked the high water mark of the bifurcation of the Palestinian Arab leadership. The Jordanian policy of cooptation was successful in fracturing the Palestinian leadership to a point where no independence movement occurred during the occupation. In the face of dislocation from their land and with no other viable options, the Palestinian leaders accepted annexation by Jordan and sought positions of power in the new Jordanian regime.

The occupation of the West Bank by Jordan presented new difficulties for King Abdullah as he was faced with the task of incorporating a large and hostile Palestinian population into his new state.⁹⁸ Many Palestinians believed that Abdullah had been responsible for the humiliating defeat which the Israelis had inflicted on the Palestinian people.⁹⁹ The Hashemite King was faced with the task of establishing some semblance of legitimacy for his regime in the eyes of the Palestinian community. He accomplished this task by using a loyal element of the traditional Palestinian Arab leadership. Abdullah recognized that the urban notable families still remained the

98 Benjamin Shwardran, *Jordan: A State of Tension*, (New York: Council for Middle Eastern Affairs Press, 1954), p. 300.

99 *ibid*, p. 300.

recognized leaders of the population. Just as they had been integral players in the British mandate, the "mediating" influence of the urban notables between the local population and central government became indispensable to the government in Amman.¹⁰⁰

Abdullah's ideas on annexation of the West Bank were in direct opposition to that of the Husayni supporters. The Hashemite King was determined to prevent the creation of an independent state which would thwart his expansionist objectives. To accomplish this task Abdullah could not allow the formation of a united front on the part of the urban notables. Jordanian strategy was aimed specifically at fracturing the Palestinian leadership so as to ensure an impotent nationalist movement. The Husaynis thus had to be eliminated as a political force.

Abdullah's relationship with al-Hajj Amin al-Husayni and his supporters had never been good. Abdullah's support for Palestinian actions during the British mandate was at best lukewarm. The Husaynis resented Abdullah for what they viewed as unwarranted intervention in Palestine. One of Abdullah's more conspicuous actions during the mandate occurred in 1939, when he forcibly expelled the Mufti's terror gangs from their refuge in the Ajlun Hills in Jordan.¹⁰¹ However, the most significant wrongdoing which Abdullah could perpetrate in the eyes of the Husaynis was the King's forceful lobby for partition in 1937. The Husaynis quickly realised that the Zionists were not the only imperialists who sought to occupy their territory. The Hashemites, with the Arab Legion, were a credible threat towards a Husayni dominated Palestinian state.

Certainly Abdullah harbored a strong dislike for the Husayni side. Furthermore, though his kingdom was founded on neutralizing opposition through patronage it was very unlikely that the Husaynis would be receptive to such offers by Abdullah. The Husaynis remained the dominant faction of the Palestinian nationalist movement and were unwilling to relinquish control of this movement or to subordinate themselves to Jordanian interests. Any attempt to co-opt the

100 Mark Heller, "Political and Social Change in the West Bank since 1967", *Palestinian Society and Politics*, editor Joel S. Migdal (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 185.

101 Clinton Bailey, *The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan*, (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1966), p. 55.

Husayni side therefore represented "plenty of danger" to the new Jordanian regime.¹⁰² As a result, Abdullah worked to exclude the Husaynis from Jordanian government.

In order to do this Abdullah needed the support of some element of the urban notables. He found this element in the Nashashibis and their supporters. The King had carefully cultivated relations with the Nashashibis during the British mandate period. He developed strong friendships with Nashashibis such as Raghib al-Nashashibi, the leader of the National Defence Party and Sulayman Tuqan of Nablus. For the two decades of Jordanian occupation these two men and their associates among the families of Dajani, Nimr, Khatib, Jaiyussi and Bargouthi dominated Palestinian politics. Their influence arose from being considered to fit "the criteria for selection" in Abdullah's government.¹⁰³ Selection was predicated on the "support shown by certain families--and individuals--for the Hashemites."¹⁰⁴ This criterion explicitly precluded any notable families who favoured pursuing armed conflict with Israel, and thus the Hussayni's and their allies.¹⁰⁵ In short, Jordanian policy was directed mainly at exploiting the Nashashibi\Husayni split.

Abdullah immediately appointed pro-Hashemite candidates to government positions. The King's first appointment was not to a political office. On December 20, 1948, shortly after the Jericho Conference Abdullah took direct aim at the Mufti. He appointed Sheikh Hussam al-Din Jarallah to replace al-Hajj Amin as the Mufti of Jerusalem. This was a direct slight aimed at the Husaynis as Jarallah had been a candidate for this office in 1920 and was overlooked by the British.¹⁰⁶ More importantly, Sheikh Jarallah had been the Nashashibi candidate. This appointment was a bad omen as far as the Husaynis were concerned.

At all levels of government the Jordanians excluded Husayni supporters from positions of power. The Jordanian system of government resembled a western democracy. There existed a two house representative assembly with an Executive Body led by a Prime Minister. In reality

102 ibid, p. 56.

103 Pamela Ann Smith, *Palestine and the Palestinians, 1876-1983*, (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 97.

104 ibid, p. 97.

105 ibid, p. 97.

106 Esmond Wright, "Abdullah's Jordan, 1947-1951", *Middle East Journal*, vol 5, no. 4(Autumn 1951), p. 447.

these bodies were little more than windowdressing as all legislative power emanated from the King. The function of the Cabinet was to carry out the will of the King, and both Abdullah and his successor Hussein ensured that the Cabinet was a stronghold for their policies. In this regard, the Cabinet was staffed with as "many intimates and loyal elements as the political situation at the time would permit."¹⁰⁷ These loyal elements were primarily found amongst the Nashashibis.

With the onset of the Jordanian civil administration in 1949 Abdullah was quick to incorporate Palestinian notables into his Cabinets. The West Bank notables of the Nashashibi type, namely Ruhi Abd al-Hadi (Minster of Foreign Affairs), Khulusi al-Khayri (Minister of Agriculture and Commerce) and Musa Nasir (Minister of Communications) were added to an enlarged Cabinet. These three men were specially picked because of their close ties with the Hashemites.¹⁰⁸ Raghib al-Nashashibi was added in August 1949 as Minister for Refugees and Rehabilitation.

The annexation of the West Bank on April 24, 1950 saw the trend of incorporating Nashashibi elements into Cabinet positions continue. For instance, the West Bank representatives in the first post-Union Cabinet consisted of Raghib al-Nashashibi, Ruhi Abd al-Hadi (Raghib's brother-in-law and formerly the highest ranking Arab civil servant in Palestine during the British mandate), Ahmad Tuqan (a member of a Nashashibi faction in Nablus and a former senior official in the mandate) and Anastas Kananya (from a pro-Nashashibi Christian family in Jerusalem).¹⁰⁹ What is remarkable about Cabinet formation during the seventeen years of Jordanian occupation is that the personell staffing the Executive rarely changed. The Tuqans were represented in seven of the first eight Cabinets by either Ahmad, Jamal or Sulayman Tuqan.¹¹⁰ Nashashibi supporters Hashim Juya al-Jiyyusi served in fourteen Cabinets; Khulus al-Khayri

107 Bailey, p. 99.

108 Wright, p. 454.

109 Bailey, pp. 99-100.

110 *ibid*, p. 100.

served in ten.¹¹¹ The Palestinian Christian and Nashashibi supporter Anastas Hananya became an indispensable economic planner and sat on thirteen Cabinets.¹¹² With the death of Raghīb al-Nashashibi in 1951 his position was given to Hashim Juya al-Jiyyusi from Tulkarm who served in fourteen Cabinets. Although Cabinet formation in Jordan underwent many changes (there were 33 Cabinets in twenty-seven years) there was seldom a change in ministers.

The Husaynis had been discredited by the new Jordanian regime. There were no Husayni supporters in the seventeen Cabinets which were formed between May 1949 and April 1957.¹¹³ Admittedly, by the 1960s and the stabilization of the political scene in Jordan, King Hussein did admit some Husaynis into the Cabinet positions. For instance, the ex-Mufti's cousins Rafiq al-Husayni and Amin Yunis al-Husayni, held the post of Foreign Minister in the 1960s. Rafiq al-Husayni's inclusion in the cabinet in 1960 marked the first time that a member of the Husayni family attained Cabinet rank in Jordan.¹¹⁴ By this time resistance to the Hashemite regime was a thing of the past. Consequently, the Hashemite policy of strengthening their regime by exploiting the Husayni-Nashashibi split may be viewed as a success.

The Cabinet was not the only political institution which was staffed by Palestinians. With formal annexation in April 1950 the Jordanian Chamber of Deputies was increased from twenty to forty members and the Senate also doubled from ten to twenty senators. Kings Abdullah and Hussein recognized the possible dangers which a hostile legislature could have posed to their autocratic style of government. Jordanian policy in the legislature was dedicated to preventing the emergence of a unified Palestinian bloc emerged which might lobby for an independent Palestinian state. As had been reflected in their appointments to Cabinet, the Hashemite Kings ensured that the traditional Palestinian leadership was fractured by restricting participation to members of the Nashashibi faction.

111 Clinton Bailey, "Cabinet Formation in Jordan", *The Middle East Confrontation States: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the West Bank*, editors Anne Sinai, Allen Pollack, (New York: American Academic Association for Peace in the Middle East, 1977), p. 105.

112 *ibid*, p. 105.

113 Bailey, *The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan*, pp. 218-23.

114 *ibid*, p. 254.

Control of the Senate, and therefore control of the Legislature, was easily accomplished by only appointing supporters of the regime to the upper House. The importance of the Senate revolved around its ability to block any opposition legislation which might be passed by a hostile Chamber of Deputies.¹¹⁵ The Senate possessed an absolute veto power in the Chamber.¹¹⁶ "The Council of Notables...amounted...to a gathering place of the King's friends...resistant to change..."¹¹⁷ The Palestinian notables who staffed the Senate were therefore drawn from the most loyal West Bank element. Invariably representation came from the Nashashibis, Tuqans, al-Dajanis, Abdul-Hadis and Khalidis.¹¹⁸ No Husaynis ever were appointed to the Chamber of Notables.

The evidence indicates only one case of Palestinian senators offering resistance to the Jordanian occupation of the West Bank. In 1951 Sulayman al-Taji al-Faruqi and Abd al-Latif Salah attacked the Rhodes Armistice Agreement and called for its abolition.¹¹⁹ Both were quickly dismissed. There were no efforts by the Palestinian senators to demand an independent state. In the absence of any Husayni elements this was unlikely to change.

The Chamber of Deputies was far more difficult to control. The reason was that, in theory, elections to the Chamber were to be based on the will of the voters. Jordanian policy sought to guarantee a Nashashibi- dominated Chamber of Deputies but to accomplish this the Jordanians had to resort to duplicitous measures.

The Hashemites attempted to ensure pro-regime Deputies in two ways. The first centered around Amman's system of representation for its constituents in the West Bank: those constituencies which were loyal to the regime were allotted more seats in Parliament.¹²⁰ Hebron, for instance, which was considered a "safe district", had a population of 135,000 and

115 *ibid*, p. 101.

116 Kamel Abu Jaber, "The Legislature of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan: A Study in Political Development", *The Muslim World*, p. 246.

117 George Harris, *Jordan*, (New Haven: HRAF, 1958), p. 91.

118 Syed Abidi, *Jordan: A Political Study*, (New York: Asia, 1965), p. 218.

119 Bailey, *The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan*, p. 103.

120 Shaul Mishal, *West Bank\East Bank: The Palestinians in Jordan, 1949-1967*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978),p. 106.

received four seats in the Chamber. Meanwhile, an unsafe district such as Nablus, which possessed a population of 175,000, was also represented by four members in spite of a larger constituency.¹²¹ Similarly, Jerusalem, with a population of 150,000, and Ramallah, with a population of 120,000, each elected only three representatives. These districts continued to be deemed Husayni strongholds. Jinin and Tulkharm, which were areas ravaged by the dispossession of villagers comprised over 85,000 inhabitants. Both districts were allotted two seats each, while the safer Bethlehem District with a population of 60,000 received the same number of representatives.

Such gerrymandering could not prevent those leaders in "unsafe" districts from being elected. The Hashemites circumvented this problem by rigging elections. John Glubb explains how this occurred:

It is scarcely possible to arrange an election in Jordan in which there will not be foul play. The cheating takes place either at the ballot boxes or during the count. The officials on the ballot boxes can work from several different methods. Some of the electors are illiterate, and the officials in charge of the boxes fill in their papers for them. At times, officials on the ballot boxes provide themselves with several thousand papers filled up in favour of the candidates whom they support. An opportunity will almost certainly occur to slip these into the box. Some voters, on the other hand, are undecided, and are pleased to accept the advice of the official. The procedure for counting also provides an opportunity for cheating.¹²²

The regime also used the Jordanian army to influence election outcomes. Soldiers were given the right to vote in areas where they were stationed on election day. Soldiers could be moved to areas where an election of a pro-government candidate was in doubt. Inevitably the extra

121 *ibid*, p. 106.

122 John Glubb, *A Soldier with the Arabs*, (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1957), p. 350.

votes which the army supplied (up to 10,000 votes in one case) ensured the success of pro-government candidates in elections.

Government candidates were drawn exclusively from the loyal Nashashibi elements. As far as ensuring the election of their candidates was concerned, the Hashemites were remarkably successful. During the entire occupation the West Bank contingent of the Chamber of Deputies was dominated by "the most prominent [Nashashibi] families."¹²³ This meant a continuation of Nashashibi supremacy.

That is not to say that those elected to the Jordanian parliament remained passive. The first Chamber of Deputies did possess dissident elements such as Tawfiq and Qadri Tuqan, Tahsin Abdul Hadi, Anwar Nusaibah and Hiknat al-Masri who were instrumental in securing a vote of non-confidence in the government over the issue of the budget.¹²⁴ In the Second Chamber the government could hardly depend on six sympathetic Palestinian Deputies who were upset with Jordan's treaty relations with Britain.¹²⁵

Finally, the civil service was re-organised so as to ensure Jordanian control of the West Bank. As was the case for the other Jordanian political bodies, loyalty was the main criterion for selection to administrative positions. Likewise the Nashashibis dominated these positions. A Royal Decree of March 6, 1949 appointed three civilian governors to the West Bank: Raghib al-Nashashibi for the Jerusalem district, Ahmad Khalil for Ramallah and the northern areas and Na'im Abd al-Hadi for Hebron. District governorships remained in the hands of the Nashashibis throughout the entire Jordanian occupation. Other West Bankers who served as District Governors were Ihsan Hashim, Hasan al-Ratib and Jamal Tuqan. All were Nashashibi supporters and loyal to the Hashemite throne.¹²⁶ Almost all of the senior administrative positions which were allocated to Palestinians were given to Nashashibi supporters.¹²⁷

123 Abu Jaber, p. 229.

124 Smith, p. 104.

125 Bailey, *The Participation of the Palestinians in the Politics of Jordan*, p. 124.

126 *ibid*, p. 104.

127 *ibid*, p. 105.

To staff the lower administrative posts Abdullah and Hussein looked to the ex-officials of the Mandatory government. These officials possessed sound administrative experience and a familiarity with the districts in which they had worked. More importantly a large portion of them had been Nashashibis, which immediately made them eligible for administrative posts in Jordan. It was around this loyalist group that the Hashemites formed their civil administration.

Certainly, the Jordanian policy of co-optation of the Nashashibi element was successful. The Jordanian occupation witnessed the eclipse of the Husayni faction as a political force. The Hashemite rulers exacerbated the factionalist tendencies of the traditional Palestinian leadership, making it unable to effect any changes to the political status quo. Disunited, the urban notables could accomplish nothing. To make matters worse those who received positions in the Jordanian regime continually rejected "demands from their own constituents...for the resumption of the nationalist struggle against both the Israeli occupation of their homeland and the Jordanian annexation of the West Bank."¹²⁸ They played an integral role in preventing the development of a national consciousness among the Palestinians on the West Bank of the Jordan.¹²⁹ This want of national consciousness ensured that no concerted effort to throw off the Jordanian occupation ever arose among the Palestinians of the West Bank.¹³⁰

Admittedly, those notables who were co-opted into the Jordanian administration were tainted as collaborators. Yet, it must be recognized that the notables after 1948 were presented with limited political options. A growing feeling of political and psychological vulnerability amongst the notables made acceptance of Jordan's guardianship all the easier. In the end, the Palestinian leadership's ability to defend Palestine had ceased to exist. With no army or territorial base from which to work, there was not much they could do but look to Abdullah for protection.

128 Pamela Ann Smith, "The Palestinian Diaspora, 1948-1985", *Journal of Palestine Studies*, vol XV, No. 3(Spring 1986), p. 97.

129 Smith, *Palestine and the Palestinians, 1876-1983*, p. 111.

130 Emile Sahliyah, *In Search of Leadership: West Bank Politics Since 1967*, (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1988), p. 19. Mishal, p. 16.

Once absorbed into the Jordanian government potential separatist inclinations on the part of the Palestinians were refracted in other political directions.

Although the Palestinians represented the majority of Jordan's population, government policy never allowed West Bank representatives to be the majority in the three most significant political bodies, the Cabinet, Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies. The allocation of portfolios in the Cabinet was another means of control. West Bankers held most of the economic portfolios such as rehabilitation, economy, trade and construction. These were deemed safe ministries since their reliance on Court decisions pertaining to key economic issues made neutralization easy. The courts ensured that the potential political power inherent in these bodies never served as a focus of political power for the West Bank leaders.¹³¹ The real locus of power rested with those East Bankers who staffed the most important offices of Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Interior and Minister of Information.

Unlike during the mandate period political organisation under the Jordanian regime was impossible. Two broadly based laws curtailed the possibility of a separatist political party. The Emergency Defense Regulations empowered the Minister of Interior to outlaw any political party which he deemed not to serve the "public interest."¹³² The 1954 Political Parties Law buttressed the Emergency Defence Regulations. The 1954 law allowed citizens to organise political parties as long as their objectives were non-violent and did not contravene the constitution. Prospective party organizations were required to submit to investigation in order to determine if their ideology was lawful. Obviously a Palestinian separatist Party would have been outlawed. According to the law the government could dissolve a party if its views were deemed to be opposed to the government.

The crowning act of Jordanian policy which overwhelmed the urban notables was the marginalisation of Jerusalem as the center of power. During the mandate period Jerusalem had been the seat of government. The most influential urban notables such as the Husaynis and

131 Mishal, p 177.

132 *ibid*, p. 34.

Nashashibis dominated the city and government offices. Jordan's occupation of the West Bank had not eclipsed the power of Jerusalem in so far as it remained the center for the groups which opposed the government.¹³³ The Husaynis continued to dominate this city and as long as the political status of Jerusalem remained unchanged, the city acted as a potential breeding ground for Palestinian separatism.¹³⁴ To counter this threat, King Abdullah began a process, completed by Hussein by which district administrative offices were made directly responsible to the ministries situated in Amman. The Jerusalem offices were eventually stripped of their authority in the West Bank, this authority being transferred to Amman by April 1951. Amman was deemed the only capital of Jordan.

This action not only had the effect of nullifying Husayni opposition, it destroyed the development of an all-West Bank leadership.¹³⁵ Jordanian policy fostered the intensification of local interests and encouraged rivalry among the localities. Competing urban notables from areas such as Nablus, Hebron, and Ramallah emerged, eliminating any hope of an All-West Bank leadership. These "local West Bank leaders tended to operate as interest groups attempting to influence Amman's policies" rather than as a united whole.¹³⁶ This crystallization of leadership in regional centers prevented Jerusalem from becoming "a political focus...for the entire West Bank."¹³⁷ The result was a severely fragmented and impotent Palestinian nationalist movement incapable of separatist ambitions.

In conclusion, the Jordanian Kings were successful in co-opting one element of the Palestinian leadership into their regime. The Nashashibis and their supporters willingly acted as collaborators, irrevocably fracturing the unity of the Palestinian national movement. The Husaynis were excluded from all positions of power so it is not unusual that no separatist Palestinian

133 Naim Sofer, "The Political Status of Jerusalem in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, 1948-1967", *Middle Eastern Studies*, p. 78.

134 *ibid*, p. 87.

135 Mishal, p. 100.

136 Shaul Mishal, "Conflictual Pressures and Cooperative Interests: Observations on West Bank-Amman Political Relations, 1949-1967", *Palestinian Society and Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 182.

137 Mishal, *West Bank\East Bank*, p. 104.

movement occurred. The Palestinian leaders allowed the Jordanian Kings to exploit the Husayni\Nashashibi split. The result was that the Palestinian leaders put up no credible resistance to the Jordanian occupier. In this way factionalism had destroyed the Palestinian leaders' ability to effect change.

However, to say that the Palestinian leaders must assume the bulk of responsibility for not achieving Palestinian independence is to ignore the context in which they found themselves after 1948. Jordanian policy overcame the strengths and abilities of the Palestinian leaders. After 1948 the Palestinian leadership had no choice but to turn to the Jordanians. The Jordanians physically occupied the West Bank with a military force the Palestinian could not defeat. Moreover, in the absence of a superior military force the Palestinian leaders were tied to Jordan whether they liked it or not. This weakness made the Palestinian leaders susceptible to Jordanian policy. This policy was aimed at co-opting a section of the Palestinian leadership and ensuring that an all-West Bank leadership did not emerge. The control of Cabinet portfolios, stifling of West Bank political organization, marginalisation of Jerusalem as a center of power and encouragement of local interests kept the national leadership in disarray.

Conclusion

The evidence suggests that during the first sixteen years of the British occupation the Palestinian leaders had a significant impact upon British political policy. While factionalism continued to divide the Palestinian leaders they were occasionally able to overcome their internecine conflicts and effect positive change. By 1922 they had pressured the British to develop a semi-elected Legislative Council enshrined as an act of policy. In 1928, after realizing the futility of boycott the notables put their differences aside and renewed negotiations with the reluctant British government. Under pressure from the Palestinian leaders, the British once again renewed their scheme for a Legislative Council in 1931. The Palestinian leadership's efforts at acquiring some form of representative government were rewarded in 1935 with a Legislative Council proposal from the British. The crowning achievement for the Palestinian leaders occurred in 1936 with the Peel Commission findings. In each instance, the Palestinian leaders exhibited a unity of purpose and action which forced the British to change or significantly alter their policy.

The end of the Arab rebellion and beginning of World War II meant an end to co-operation between the Palestinian leaders. At no point during the war, nor during the last three years of the mandate, were they able to come together and challenge British political policy. There are no instances of change in policy during this time which can be directly attributed to the efforts of the Palestinian leaders. This did not change during the Jordanian occupation. The Jordanian kings found willing collaborators in the Nashashibi camp. The Nashashibis and their supporters reaped the benefits of Jordanian rule while the Husaynis were excluded from all positions of power in the expanded Jordanian state. Jordanian strategy was specifically aimed at fracturing the Palestinian leadership by allowing only the most loyal Hashemite supporters to attain positions in government. This strategy was successful, as no challenge to the Jordanian regime arose from among the traditional Palestinian leaders. Jordanian policy had cut the Palestinian nationalist movement in half.

Thus, factionalism after 1937 destroyed the Palestinian leadership's ability to effect change on political policy. Because of this, the British and Jordanian occupations were partially the result of a failure of leadership. The Palestinian leaders were unable to maintain a consistent campaign of pressure to force their occupiers to create some sort of system of representative government leading to an independent Palestinian state.

What is equally apparent though is that, while factionalism caused a failure in leadership, it is not the only factor which seriously impeded the drive for Palestinian national independence. An equally destructive force was British and Jordanian policy. British policy was never serious about establishing representative institutions. The essential nature of the mandate which sought to establish a Jewish National Home precluded a truly representative government. The most telling example of this reluctance occurred in 1936 when the British parliament voted down the Legislative Council proposal. It is important to note that the Legislative Council was supported by the "majority" of the Palestinian leadership. Moreover, there was substantial support for representative institutions throughout the remainder of the mandate period. Although the Palestinian leaders engaged in factionalist struggles, they were, more or less, united on the issue of representative institutions. The British could have enacted policy creating a Legislative Council after 1928 or the constitutional proposals after 1939. That they chose not to do so had less to do with the factionalism of the Palestinian leadership than with the mandate's aim to safeguard the Jewish National Home. In the face of British immobilism there was nothing the Palestinian leadership could do to gain representative institutions. The same could be said of the Jordanian period. Co-optation was the central objective of the Jordanian kings. By assimilating the most loyal element of the West Bank leadership into the Jordanian polity, the Jordanians ensured that an All-West Bank leadership never emerged. Robbed of their territorial base and lacking a sufficient military force capable of defeating the Arab Legion, the Palestinian leaders were forced to accept their fate with little or no resistance.

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