

## *The Palestinian Arab Strike and Riot of 1936 in the Hungarian Press*

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There was a great interest for the situation in Palestine between the two world wars in Hungary especially between 1936 and 1939. In 1936 the Palestinian Arab strike broke out and the Hungarian press informed its readers about the situation. there.

In this essay, I'm trying to show news, reports and other writings representatively in the period of the first phase of the riot. I have chosen these newspapers because of their political turn and they were widely read. These newspapers are: *Pesti Napló* (Pesti Journal), *Népszava* (People's Voice), *Nemzeti Újság* (National Journal) and the *Egyenlőség* (Equality). These newspapers represent the major political-religious views and their enounce their opinions with their readers.<sup>1</sup>

During the 1936 riot of Palestine happened the Italian-Ethiopian conflict and the Spanish Civil War, too. Apart from these the above mentioned Palestinian riots were in the middle of attention, as well. During this period the role of Palestine was re-evaluated both by the British Empire and by the world.

Britain acquired Palestine after the First World War when the League of Nations confirmed its right to Palestine as a mandate<sup>2</sup> During the 1920's the Arab population was in majority in Palestine against the Jews. This time there were a few Jewish immigrants arriving in Palestine, and there were times such as between 1926 and 1928 when more Jews left the country than entered. In the 1930's the Jewish immigrants came in a big

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<sup>1</sup> *Pesti Napló*: Daily newspaper (1850–1939). It was published as a liberal daily newspaper from 1920. *Népszava*: Political journal. It was issued from 1877. Between the periods of two world wars it was the only legal daily newspaper of the Hungarian labour movement. After the German occupation of Hungary *Népszava* was banned and it was only issued after 1945. *Nemzeti Újság*: Political journal (1919–1944). It was one of the main so-called Christian streams' organs. It was published by a company which was established and controlled by the Catholic clergy. *Egyenlőség*: Jewish political daily newspaper. (1881–1938 December). The launch of the newspaper related to the trial of Tiszaeszlár (A Jewish butcher was accused of killing a young girl). The newspaper guided the political, social and cultural efforts of the Hungarian Jews. There were a lot of country-wide Jewish institutes which were established by the influence of the newspaper such as Israelite Fund, Israelite Hungarian Literary Society etc. Its programme contained the integration of the Hungarian Jews.

<sup>2</sup> The Council of the League of Nations confirmed its mandate on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1922 and ratified it on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1923. MAKAI György: *Israel Állam és a cionizmus*. (The State of Israel and the Zionism) Budapest, 1973. pp. 118–119.

number to the country and this affected the capacity of Palestine<sup>3</sup> This significantly changed the country's economic, social and racial-ethnic content which meant that the native Arabs slowly but surely felt themselves as second-rate citizens on their motherland.<sup>4</sup>

The Jews established their own institutions and their political organisations and political parties were multiplied. They established, among other things, the Jewish National Council (Va'ad Leumi), General Workers' Union (Histadrut) as well their defence organisation the Haganah. With the Zionist congresses and establishing other organisations they quasi cooperated the foundation of their future state.<sup>5</sup>

The Arabs were not able to form similar institutions or at least a unitary national party because of their divinity.<sup>6</sup> But the large-scale Jewish immigration deepened on the union among the Arab movements and at the end of 1935 their unification started to get into shape. They presented a memorandum to the High Commissioner, Sir Arthur Wauchope<sup>7</sup>, in which they demanded to stop the Jewish immigration, to ban the Arabs to sell their lands to the Jews and establish the majority Arab government what had been promised for them for a long time. In the year of 1935 the prelude of 1936 riot broke out. This outbreak was led by Sheikh Izz al-Din al-Qassam<sup>8</sup>. The British put down this revolt quickly and the Sheikh was killed by the British in a shootout. At the funeral of the Sheikh the crowd

<sup>3</sup> Before 1933 the average annual immigrants were 8–9 thousand Jews arrived in Palestine. Between 1933 and 1936 this number was over 30 thousand a year which was impeded by the White Paper of 1939. For the immigration data see: GLUBB, Sir John Bagott: *Britain and the Arabs*. London, 1959. p. 145. GILBERT, Martin: *The Routledge Atlas of the Arab–Israeli Conflict*. London, 1996. p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> There were several wave of Jewish immigration into Palestine (aliyah). The first organized aliyah started right after the pogroms in Russia (1881–1882). In 1922 there were 84 000 Jews and 600 000 Arabs living in Palestine while in 1939 the number of Jews were already 430 000 which bulked up to 28% of the population of Palestine. J. NAGY László: *Az arab országok története*. (The history of the Arab States) Szeged, 1994. p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> The League of Nations determined that a Jewish Agency be created which cooperates with the mandate. Va'ad Leumi (National Council) Pre-State elected governing body, the executive branch of the state-in-the-making, which functioned 1920–1948, and focused on social and welfare issues. Histadrut was established in 1920 and was the collective body of trade unions in Israel. Haganah was founded in 1920.

<sup>6</sup> The Palestinian Arabs were divided between the emulation against the Jews and the emulation among them, too. The political powers were gathered round the two powerful clans; the mild-tempered and pro-British Nashashibis and the more aggressive Hussaynis. Some parties were established in the early 1930's but they were not determinant. There were tense conflicts between the rural and the urban Arabs.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Arthur Wauchope (1874–1947) British general. The High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan between 1931–38.

<sup>8</sup> al-Qassam, Sheikh Izz al-Din (1881–1935) Palestinian Arab leader. A member of the Muslim Brotherhood. He was the first Arab leader who announced armed insurrection against the British. The military wing of Hamas terror organisation was named after al-Kassem.

cheered him and he became the first martyr of the Palestinian national movement. So, his death greatly assisted to the outbreak of the next year's strike and riot and its spirituality.<sup>9</sup>

The riot started on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 1936, when armed Arab men hold up a dozen cars on a motorway and robbed all the passengers, killed two Jewish travellers, and wounded a third. On the next day the members of Irgun<sup>10</sup> took revenge on the Arabs for the killing of those two Jews and they killed two Arab workers in their hut near Petah Tiqva. This was the moment that triggered the smouldering events, which was already in the air. The Arab politicians called for a general strike but to avoid further violence they wanted the strike to be controlled by them to force the British government to repair the Arabs' prejudice. This strike and riot was completely different from the previous ones because it was not only turned against the Jewish immigrants but the British also. The strike came home to the British Empire and also made an impact on the neighbouring Arab countries. This Arab strike called into existence the Arab Higher Committee<sup>11</sup> which coordinated and controlled the general strike. The Arab Higher Committee sought to achieve a united front, but it was divided between those who supported the economical-political strike as an instrument of moral pressure on the British government and those who viewed the strike as a revolutionary act, as well as civil disobedience, would play a necessary part. The former tended to come from the Nashashibi adherents and the latter from the Hussayni faction and Istiqlalists. The strike and the violence became more and more intense because the government did not answer these questions and increased the Jewish immigration rate. Meanwhile the British government announced that she would send a commission to Palestine which would investigate the reasons of the present violence in return for which the Arabs would end the strike.<sup>12</sup> The general strike continued and the temper against the Jews increased in the neighbouring Arab countries, too. There were several anti-Jewish demonstrations in Syria, Transjordan yet also in Iraq and in Algeria.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> This riot was at the end of 1935, which was added to the Italian invasion in Ethiopia together with that the Arabs found a great amount of arms in the port of Jaffa; they thought that the Jews wanted to use that against them. The intense unemployment rate in the circle of the Arabs promoted to accelerate the events, too.

<sup>10</sup> Etzel (Irgun Zvai Leumi) National Military Organization. This underground resistance group was founded in 1931. It split from Haganah and was disbanded in 1948 when the State of Israel was established.

<sup>11</sup> Arab Higher Committee (al-Lajnah al-Arabiyyah al-Ulyah): Organisation of the Palestinian Arabs. It was established on 25th April 1936 and was led by Mufti Hajj Amin al-Hussayni between 1936–1939. It was originally called the Committee of Ten. The Arab Higher Committee itself was banned in October 1937. Lesch, Ann Mosely: *Arab Politics in Palestine, 1917–1939*. London, 1979. pp. 115–116.

<sup>12</sup> This was the Royal Peel Commission and the report was the Peel-report which presented its report to the Parliament 7<sup>th</sup> July 1937. The Royal Commission recommended the partition of Palestine into two parts – to a small Jewish and an Arab sector. The Arab leaders rejected the proposal while the Jewish leaders accepted it with reservation.

<sup>13</sup> "Az algiri arabok, a palesztinai arabok példáján, a zsidóellenes kilengések felidezésével a kormányra nyomást akarnak gyakorolni, hogy ez a kívánt gazdasági intézkedéseket megtegye." ("The Algerian Arabs, with the example of the Palestinian Arabs, want to put pressure on the

There were several Arab rulers who offered their help to reach peace.<sup>14</sup> It touched England in her dignity because if she accepted this help then it would become clear that the great British Empire could not be able to control even a small country like Palestine. Eventually, the British government mobilized its strength and sent their troops to Palestine.<sup>15</sup>

The disorder lasted until the beginning of 1939, that in the end greatly contributed to the borne of the future Jewish state and at the same time it knocked down the effort of the Palestinian Arabs which enabled them to create their own state that time.<sup>16</sup>

The Hungarian press paid great attention to the current events happening in Palestine. It was due to that the Hungarian politics turned its attention to the British and reported interestedly from this "out-of-the-way" place. When the al-Qassam outbreak started at the end of 1935 the Italian-Ethiopian war had not finished yet and then Egypt became independent from the British in 1936 and moreover the riot and uprising in Palestine broke out in the spring of 1936, this corner of the world was not only greatly estimated for the British Empire but for the world also. In the future this piece of land would show the world of its strategic and political importance.

The first newspaper, which gave information in a short article what was happening in Palestine, was the *Népszava* (People's Voice). This article was already out on 19<sup>th</sup> of April with the heading of, "*Véres tüntetések Tel-Avivban*" (Bloody demonstrations in Tel-Aviv).<sup>17</sup> The *Nemzeti Újság* (National Journal) and the *Pesti Napló* (Pesti Journal) published their first articles on 21<sup>st</sup> April in full length.<sup>18</sup> The *Egyenlőség* (Equality), because it was a weekly paper, it published its first writing on 23<sup>rd</sup> with the title of, "*Lángban álló Palesztina*" (Palestine on fire).<sup>19</sup> During the strike and riot the *Népszava* (People's Voice) gave articles every week about the events while the other newspapers published some articles mainly between April and June as well as between at the end of September and October.

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government (of Algeria) with the recalling of anti-Jewish swing, that this take the desired economic measure." In: *Egyenlőség*, 1936. július 9. p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> A Joint summons was addressed by Ibn Saud, king of Saudi Arabia, Yahija, imam of Yemen, Ghazi, king of Iraq and Abdullah emir of Transjordan to the Palestinian Arabs to call upon to put an end to the strike.

<sup>15</sup> There were 11 battalions in Palestine and a 15 thousand expedition force was commanded from England. The British troops took off at the end of September of 1936 to put down the disorder. The Arab Higher Committee put an end to the strike on 12<sup>th</sup> October and thus there was a relatively short peacefulness in Palestine.

<sup>16</sup> The turbulence ended in the spring of 1939 and after the British government issued the MacDonald White Paper. According to this, England does not decline the Balfour declaration but they do not form Palestine into a Jewish state. After 10 years there would be a unified Jewish and Arab Palestine. Under the terms of the White Paper, 75.000 immigrants were to be admitted during the five-year period and no further Jewish immigration into Palestine would be permitted without Arab acquiescence. The transfer of land from Arabs to Jews would be restricted or banned for the Jews.

<sup>17</sup> *Népszava*, 1936. április 19. p. 16.

<sup>18</sup> *Nemzeti Újság*, 1936. április 21. p. 9. *Pesti Napló*, 1936. április 21. p. 11.

<sup>19</sup> *Egyenlőség*, 1936. április 23. pp. 1-2.

The information was obtained from different sources but it must be added that most of these stem from English sources. The English sources mainly meant the newspapers issued in London or the reports of English correspondents in Cairo and in Jerusalem. The information obtained from these sources, however, did not express the power of the British Empire namely, I think, that in the reports the effect of British censorship cannot be recognised. Therefore a huge part of the news from Palestine could not be controlled by the British authorities. The reports adapted from London and Jerusalem dominates among the adapted information, which refer to the newspapers that come out here. These are followed by the news published from Cairo and Paris and then on one occasion they got news from two newspapers issued in Milan and Rome (*Corriere della Sera* and *Giornale d'Italia*). At this time, according to English reports, the suspicion emerged that it maybe Italy that stands behind financing the Palestinian Arabs. According to these papers, "*The Italian Bank does not possess as much money as could be enough to raise an Arab province.*"<sup>20</sup>

They used information mainly from the Havas and the Intransigent press associations among the news-agencies. These were the characteristics of the three dailies, however the weekly newspaper did not indicate where it got its information from. The Magyar Távirati Iroda (Hungarian News Agency) reports only once from London to the *Pesti Napló* (*Pesti Journal*) from its London editorial office, which was sent by the editor there.<sup>21</sup> Only the *Pesti Napló* (*Pesti Journal*) had its own representative correspondent in London, who was also the correspondent of the United Press. More letters, articles and reports arrived to the *Egyenlőség* (*Equality*) and the *Pesti Napló*'s (*Pesti Journal*) editorial office from those Hungarian Jews who lived in Palestine. These were brought back by a person or persons who returned from Palestine. Among them there were Hungarian pilgrims, Jews or Christians or for example Dezső Ligeti opera singer who toured in the Holy Land.<sup>22</sup>

Three such articles can be found in the three dailies that are worth mentioning because they show the backgrounds of the events and may predict the future of that region. The first of these articles can be found in the *Nemzeti Újság* (*National Journal*) which was published on 24<sup>th</sup> May with the signature of Dénes Halmossy with the title, "*Mi történik Palesztinában. A Közel kelet nagy kérdései vajúdnak az arabok és a cionisták véres összecsapásai mögött*" (What is happening in Palestine? The significant questions of the Middle East are struggling behind the Arabs and the Zionists' bloody conflicts).<sup>23</sup> It begins with the short introduction of the recent events then it enters upon

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<sup>20</sup> *Pesti Napló*, 1936. május 29. p. 10. "Olasz Banknak nem áll rendelkezésére annyi összeg, amennyi egy arab tartomány fellátására elegendő lenne." The newspaper quoted from the leading article of *Giornale d'Italia*.

<sup>21</sup> *Pesti Napló*, 1936. szeptember 13. p. 9. The editor in London was László Ráskay.

<sup>22</sup> Such private persons lived in Palestine for example Károly Glück, Edit Patai, Jakob Friedländer, Vilmos Alexander or those who got back from the pilgrimage for example Sándor Eppler, the secretary general of *Pesti Izraelita Hitközség* (*Israelite Congregation of Pest*), Dr. Sándor Bücher privat-docent and the rabbi of Keszthely, Dr. József Patay the editor of *Múlt és Jövő*, Dr. Hugó Csergő presidential secretary of *Pesti Izraelita Hitközség* (*Israelite Congregation of Pest*).

<sup>23</sup> *Nemzeti Újság*, 1936. május 24. p. 11.

the Arab demands. Then it gives some information about the English politics and mentions that England needs the Arabs. The writer of the article votes for the Arabs, which means that England has to stand by the Arabs because in a long run it would be more profitable than supporting the Jews. He writes this in the paper: "*England needs to secure the Arab factor mainly against Russia and in the future she needs [the Arabs] against the fascist Italian Empire.*"<sup>24</sup> Therefore England's support of Palestine and the Arab Middle-East is important due to the Soviet-Russian threat, the strategic importance of the region as well as the Italian invasion of the Horn of Africa requires the support of the Arabs. It is mentioned that the English politics uses the policy of "divide et impera" and follows the same policy in Palestine as it is done in India and Egypt, and it is written: "*It gives 'free vent to' the opposing parties as well as political wings and they will step in with practical and brilliant mediator proposals if everything fails.*"<sup>25</sup> Thus they try to play off their enemies against each other and they want to make the most of this situation for themselves. However, in this case they did not count on the fact that between the two parties just only one will weaken greatly and the other silently will get out of the conflict leaning on the British.

László Faragó wrote articles and reports in the *Pesti Napló* (Pesti Journal).<sup>26</sup> He became various newspapers' foreign correspondent then in 1936 he worked for the AP news-agency as their reporter and he also worked for the *London Sunday Chronicle* and they sent him to Palestine to cover the things happening there. He became the correspondent of the *Pesti Napló* (Pesti Journal) also and sent longer articles to Hungary via telegraph. Later on, he wrote a book about his adventures in Palestine and we can consider these as accurate sources because he wrote about the events truly objectively.<sup>27</sup> These writings are the backbone of his book. There are seven reports were sent by Faragó to Hungary which were published between 14<sup>th</sup> June and 7<sup>th</sup> July. His reports reflect the realities of Palestine reasonably enough in that time. Faragó reports on the feelings and impressions of the new Jewish immigrants, about the Arab nationalism and he gives a

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. "Az arab tényező biztosítása Angliának elsősorban Oroszországgal, a jövőre nézve pedig a fasiszta olasz birodalommal szemben van szüksége."

<sup>25</sup> Ibid. "Szabad folyást enged a szembenálló pártoknak, illetőleg politikai érdekcsoportoknak és csak a legvégső szükség esetén lépnek közbe egyes és bravúros közvetítő javaslatokkal."

<sup>26</sup> Faragó, László (Ladislav Farago) (1906–1980) He was born in a Jewish family in Hungary. He obtained his university degree in Budapest in the field of foreign relations and foreign trade. He left Hungary in the beginning of the 1930's and then he worked for German and American newspapers as a correspondent. Later he was the correspondent of AP press association and was the foreign executive of *Sunday Chronicle* in London. He reported from Ethiopia before the Italian invasion and he turned his attention to the Palestinian events. Soon after he went to the USA and there he became a member of U.S. Office Naval Intelligence until 1946. He was one of the editors of the Hungarian broadcast in the Free European Radio in 1950 and was the staffer of the Radio between 1950–1952 and his pseudonym was "colonel Bell".

<sup>27</sup> He wrote a book about the events in Palestine: *Az új Palesztina*. Budapest, 1936. In English: FARAGO, L.: *Palestine at the Crossroads*. London, 1937.

report made with the Mufti of Jerusalem, Hajj Amin al-Hussayni<sup>28</sup> with the leader of the Arab uprising and he says: *“Some accuse us that the movement of the Arabs takes against the British. This isn’t so, because we want to live in peace and friendship with the English and we don’t have any complaint against the British government. The whole Arab movement takes against the newly arrived Jews and the Jewish immigration alone. We have never recognised the Balfour Declaration and the last times’ experiences confirm us the more in this because we see that the strongers shove aside the weakers yet today. We are in fear of that the same will happen to us as it happened to the Abyssinians if the Jews strengthen their power in Palestine.”*<sup>29</sup> The mufti accused the Jews alone the outbreak of the riots and as he says: *“[The Jews are the ones] who have made better businesses and have occupied all those workplaces that the striker Arabs left.”*<sup>30</sup> Faragó, asked Moshe Shertok<sup>31</sup> too about what could be at the back of the Arab movement who answered *“In my opinion the Arab movement doesn’t turn against anyone, however, it turns against an independent existing Arab state... We drive hard to live in with the greatest sympathy with the Arab social layers. But we have made up our minds to the utmost: we insist on to our gained rights to the bitter end and we are willing to give our lives for Palestine because life doesn’t mean anything to us if we had to give up our country.”*<sup>32</sup> Faragó mentioned

<sup>28</sup> Hajj Amin al-Hussayni (1897–1974) Palestinian Arab nationalist leader. He was the mufti of Jerusalem from 1921 and from 1936 he was the chairman of the Arab Higher Committee. After the riots of 1936 he left Palestine and escaped to Lebanon and during the Second World War he was in Germany after that he left for Egypt. His influence on the Muslim world declined after 1948.

<sup>29</sup> *“Egyesek azzal vádolnak minket, hogy az arab mozgalom az angolok ellen irányul. Ez nincs így, mert mi békében és barátságban akarunk élni az angolokkal és az angol kormányzat ellen a világon semmi kifogásunk sincs. Az egész arab mozgalom kizárólag az újonnan érkezett zsidók és a zsidó bevándorlás ellen irányul. Mi sohasem ismertük el a Balfour-deklarációt és az utolsó idők tapasztalatai csak még jobban megerősítenek ebben az elhatározásunkban, mert látjuk, hogy az erősebbek a gyengébbeket egyszerűen félretaszítják még ma is. Attól félünk, hogy ugyanaz fog történni velünk, ami az abesszinekkel történt, ha a zsidók Palesztinában még jobban megerősödnek.”* Pesti Napló, 1936. június 19. p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. *“Akik így jobb üzletet csinálnak és nyomban elfoglalták mindazokat a munkahelyeket, amelyeket a sztrájkoló arabok elhagytak.”* The Jews rather used Jewish labour than Arab because in this way they wanted to protect their industry.

<sup>31</sup> Moshe Shertok (1894–1965) He was born in the Ukraine and he landed in Palestin in 1908. He was fluent in Arabic. He was the director of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency from 1932. He was among the people who signed the Declaration of Independence of 1948. He was appointed as the leader of the World Zionist Congress, the Zionist World Organisation and the Jewish Agency in 1960.

<sup>32</sup> *“Az arab mozgalom nézetem szerint nem irányul senki ellen sem, irányul azonban egy független arab állam megvalósítása érdekében... Mi minden igyekezetünkkel azon vagyunk, hogy az arab rétegekkel a legjobb megértésben éljünk. El vagyunk azonban a végsőkre szánva: a legvégsőkig ragaszkodunk szerzett jogainkhoz, Palesztináért életünket is hajlandók vagyunk áldozni, mert ez az élet semmit sem jelent számunkra, ha a mi országunkról le kellene mondanunk.”* Pesti Napló, 1936. július 7. p. 7.

the meeting with Abdullah<sup>33</sup> in Amman which he gives detailed information in his book. He reports that there are several spy systems operating in Palestine today, Arabs, Jews, British and about one tenth of the population have tight relations with some of the organizations that would mean about 100.000 men. Faragó also mentions the newly founded communist organisation, that according to him, and his informants too, played a great role in fanaticising the Arabs but the number of the communists are about 300 in Palestine – 200 Arabs and 100 Jews. According to him, Arab arm smugglers provide the Jews with arms as well as the Arabs. Most of the arms have arrived from Germany to Palestine without the knowledge of the German official authorities. Agents of big German arms factories regularly travel the countries that surround Palestine where they make good deals with not only the government but with the secret arm-smugglers, too.<sup>34</sup> The Pesti Napló (Pesti Journal) quotes from a newspaper issued in Rome and it says that “*England deliberately makes the matters effectively worse concerning Palestine, in order to send 20.000 more troops to reinforce the guards of the Suez Canal and those will be still there when the order and calm are restored completely in Palestine.*”<sup>35</sup>

The most interesting article, I suppose, comes from László Ákos<sup>36</sup> a writer of Népszava (People’s Voice), with the title “*A világforgalom keresztútján. Mit akar Anglia Palesztinában.*” (At the crossroads of world traffic. What does England want in Palestine?).<sup>37</sup> He emphasises the background of the economical events and gives explanation to the world economic situations about the British troop concentration, which perhaps foreshadows the events of the world politics of tomorrow. He thinks that the components and the outbreaking factors of the events are not in the immigration but in the land, taxation and employment questions: “*The land, taxation and the employment matters: these are the three sticking points, from which the two racially related people, the Jewry and the Arabs struggle breaks out. The Arab farmers in debt were “bought out” by tens of thousands by the Jewish Fund.*”<sup>38</sup> He adds to this that the population of the Arabs are growing by 25.000 every year on their shrinking land and this is also a very

<sup>33</sup> Abdullah, ibn Hussein al Hashem (1882–1951). The emir of Transjordan (1921–1946) and the first king of the Hashemite kingdom of Jordan (1946–51). He was shot at the footsteps of al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem in 1951.

<sup>34</sup> Pesti Napló, 1936. június 26. pp. 7–8.

<sup>35</sup> “*A palesztinai ügyeket Anglia szándékosan tünteti fel a valóságosabbnál súlyosabbaknak, hogy így húszezer emberrel többet küldhessen a Szezi-csatorna őrségének megerősítésére és ezek a csapatok akkor is ott lesznek, amikor Palesztinában újra helyreáll a teljes rend és nyugalom.*” Pesti Napló, 1936. szeptember 12. p. 12. The Pesti Napló quoted from the Italian newspaper Tribuna.

<sup>36</sup> László Ákos (1901–1971) journalist, editor. Between 1933 and 1939 he wrote the economic column of Népszava.

<sup>37</sup> Népszava, 1936. június 14. pp. 7–8.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. “*A földkérdés, az adó kérdés és a munkakérdés: ez az a három ütközőpont, ami közül a két fajilag rokon népnek, a zsidóságnak és az arabságnak küzdelme kirobbant. Az eladósodott arab földművelőket ezrével és tízezérel “vásárolta ki” földjeiből a Zsidó Alap.*” Jewish National Fund was established in 1901. The main aim of this organization was to buy as many lands as they could in Erec Izráél (the land of Israel) and to give it to the Jewish people as an eternal and unassignable property.



serious problem. Thus the growing capitalism in Palestine quickly generates the wageworker masses. He thinks that the most serious problem is the appearing discrimination in the wages, because the difference between the wages of the Arab and Jewish workers was 50 or 100% or more.<sup>39</sup> He viewed that the peaceful development of Palestine was in the equalization of the two people's wages. The Jews brought the economical boom to Palestine with their capitals but the economical boom is followed by a social revolution and that happened in the circles of the Palestinian Arabs. He emphasized the important geological and strategic area of Palestine in the Eastern part of the Mediterranean basin. He explains that Palestine is the continental gate on the route to India, and Haifa can be found on the shores of Palestine with its new and modern naval port, the oil from Mosul arrives here via pipelines and there is the Europe-India-Australia skyway flights' central flying field.

The Egyenlőség (Equality) rather deals with the detailed events instead but, of course, it stands up for the Jews; but still not unfriendly with the Arabs; at the same it writes strictly about the British, too. The most well-known person to write for this newspaper is Albert Einstein with his article "Israel Árnyéka" (The shadow of Israel).<sup>40</sup> In this article he writes about the anti-Semitism, thus: *"The anti-Semitism shows that the balance of the individual and the society is disturbed. Weather is the individual gains ascendancy over the society or vice versa this disturbs the life of the nations and it leads to a fatal catastrophe which foreshadows itself... The anti-Semitism is the great barometer of the world situation. The more it foams with rage the bigger the grief of the world. If a country is ill then the anti-Semitism has its ground there. A nation, which has been affected by the anti-Semitism, is threatened by the sinking. History: God's judgement. If we study the events from an appropriate perspective, then it is very easy to prophesy to the anti-Semitic people..."*<sup>41</sup>

The ending of the riot – in many newspapers – was carried back to the economic problem and as to them the riots had been ceased if the British had not started their military operations in mid September as well as if the Central Arab Committee and the foreign Arab rulers had not proposed their appeal for peace. Economical motives greatly influenced the ending of the strike. Firstly, here we have to mention the orange growing factor. The huge part of the Arab community depended on the harvest of orange and from the income of selling it. The orange harvest was approaching and the Arabs could not let the Jews to seize the initiative for them on this field, too. The orange growing was the

<sup>39</sup> For example a skilled Jewish worker's daily earnings was between 200 and 400 mills (1 Palestinian pound = 1000 mills), while the same skilled Arab worker earned just 100–300 mills. An Arab day-labourer earned 50–80 mills while a Jewish day-labourer got 150 mills a day.

<sup>40</sup> Egyenlőség, 1936. szeptember 16. p. 7.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. "Az antiszemitizmus azt mutatja, hogy az egyén és a társadalom egyensulya meg van zavarva. Akár az egyén kerül a társadalom fölé, akár fordítva, ez megzavarja a népek életét és elkerülhetetlen katasztrófához vezet, amely előrevetíti az árnyékát...Az antiszemitizmus a világhelyzet nagy barométere. Minél jobban dühöng, annál nagyobb baj van a világon. Ha egy ország beteg, akkor ott talaja van a zsidógyűlöletnek. Egy nép, melyet megfertőzött az antiszemitizmus, azt a sülyedés fenyegeti. A történelem: Isten ítélete. Ha az eseményeket kellő időbeli távlatból vizsgáljuk, akkor könnyű az antiszemita népeknek profétálni..."

only major source of income for the Arabs, and during the strike their orange export was stopped. Conversely, during this time the Jewish orange export increased, so the Jewish orange plantations were not accidentally destroyed by the Arabs, because they feared their own source of income would fall to Jewish hands. The attacks against the citrus plantations and burning them played a great role during the strike. The Jewish orange plantations were constantly attacked by the Arabs and these acts were on the second place and just the violent armed actions were preceded it.<sup>42</sup> Many Arab planters were economically and financially affected by the strike, because they were deprived of a great amount of revenue from orange exports. The president of Haifa strike committee, Khalil Taha, argued that orange merchants should stop striking and instead pay a tax to the Arab Higher Committee on each orange crate sold, thereby generating funds for the wider strike. But Kalil Taha's suggestion was not followed by his act because he was assassinated on September 27.<sup>43</sup>

Therefore we could say that the orange growing made a great part of the restoration of the order because it was almost the only one piece of goods on the part of the Arabs in Palestine. So actually it was not the British who put down the disorder but the economic pressure itself.<sup>44</sup>

To summarize the representative analyses in the Hungarian press it can be declared that the Hungarian political press turned its interest to the events in Palestine. The newspapers published their articles fairly truly and correctly even though they depended on largely British or information of British origin.

The 1936's struggle had not finished among the Jews and the Arabs, and England made only a temporal concession to the Arabs, with which she won a breathing space. The disturbances continued and only the outbreak of the Second World War ended the Arab uprising, and the future Palestinian Arab state, too. England had to face a new and strengthened "enemy" at the end of the war – with the strengthened Palestinian Jewry.

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<sup>42</sup> *Nemzeti Újság*, 1936. október 10. p. 4. About the current events in Palestine, their political and economic background see: ÁKOS László: *A világforgalom keresztútján. Mit akar Anglia Palesztinában?* (At the crossroads of world traffic. What does England want in Palestine?) In: *Népszava*, 1936. június 14. pp. 7–8.

<sup>43</sup> LESCH, Ann Mosely: *op. cit.*, p. 220.

<sup>44</sup> For the role of citrus in Palestine see: WYLER, E. W.: *Ez Palesztina*. (This is Palestine) Budapest, 1948. Translated by: Erzsébet Monostory. pp. 58–61. LOWDERMILK, Walter Clay: *Palesztina, az ígéret földje*. (Palestine, the promised land) Budapest, 1948. pp. 76–78.