

31. Zirin Village Land Sales (16 August 1930)

Husayni, Hilmi. "Regarding Sales of Zirin Village Land." Letter. 16 Aug. 1930. MS. Israel State Archives. Jerusalem. Box 3511/1

Confidential

In reply please quote

J.200/1/1

Administrative Officer

Nablus Area

Subject: Sales of Land Zirin Village

Reference: Your 200/4/J of 8.8.30

1. The lands of Zirin village are musha and are divided into 85 shares of which about 11 shares are owned by the original inhabitants of the village and the rest owned by the 'Abd al-Hadi family.
2. The approximate area of each share is estimated to be 250 standard dunams.
3. The shares owned by 'Abd al-Hadi are cultivated by one of the under-mentioned methods:
 - a. Partnership with one or two of the inhabitants of Zirin, i.e. the owner and the cultivator share in all expenditures and benefit or
 - b. The owner gives his share by agreement to take a certain percentage of the yield after the payment of the tithe and expenses. Sometimes they recruit tenants from outside (the village).
4. The tenants of Zirin village are either originally from the village or outsiders who came to Zirin over the last 10-30 years and therefore, these tenants are affected by the change of the ownership.
5. Wajih Abdul Karim 'Abd al-Hadi of Nablus mortgaged and sold by public auction his share which is about 1/85 to certain Mustafa Shahin of Nablus [a middle man to the JNF, Jewish National Fund] who mortgaged the same plot in the name of the JNF for one month, which is now about to be exhausted.
6. There are now three transactions in hand for mortgage which are owned by Yusuf Abdul Karim [1/85], Fouad Kassem 'Abd al-Hadi [1/85], and Afif 'Abd al-Hadi [1/2 /85], and also Hilmi 'Abd al-Hadi and Bros. of Arrabeh, who are proceeding to Jaffa to make the preliminary agreement with Hankin (land purchasing agent for the JNF) for mortgage and sale of the shares.
7. It is believed that every one 'Abd al-Hadi is going to sell to the JNF or any other person whom they will find, but owing to the fact that they are afraid to lose their moral prestige amongst the inhabitants because of such sales, they are borrowing the money from the JNF and making secret arrangements in which they agree to sell their mortgaged share by public auction, simply to show the public that they were unable to refund the money borrowed and that they were obliged to accept the sale which was affected through the court, and in the meantime to relieve them from the rights of the cultivators (Protection of Cultivators Ordinance, 1929) which will be claimed, should the lands be sold in the ordinary way.

HH/BM

[signed] Hilmi Husayni, District Officer

32. Zirin Village Land Sales (5 September 1930)

Husayni, Hilmi. "Regarding Sales of Zirin Village Land." Letter. 16 Aug. 1930. MS. Israel State Archives. Jerusalem. Box 3511/1

Chief Secretary

Subject: Zirin Village

1. The above village is situated on the Jenin-Afuleh road about ten kilometers south of Afuleh.
2. It is owned by the 'Abd al-Hadi family and partly by the fellaheen. I recently received information that the former were mortgaging their shares to Jewish mortgagees on terms requiring the repayment of the principal in thirty days. There was, however, an understanding that the mortgagor would default in payment and that the property would be submitted to auction and bought in by the mortgagees at an agreed price. I asked the District Officer for a report and his reply bears out my information.
3. The village is stated to comprise about 20,000 dunams divided into 85 shares of which 74 belong to the 'Abd al-Hadi family and 11 to the fellaheen. The population is about 900.
4. The District Officer reports that all of the 'Abd al-Hadis are believed to be entering into agreements for sale with the Jewish National Fund and that the relevant documents are being signed in Tel Aviv. The vendors fear loss of their prestige if they execute official sales to a Jewish organization and they are, therefore, proceeding by way of short term mortgage, default and compulsory sale. Four mortgages have been registered, of which one has been foreclosed and the share purchased by the Jewish National Fund.
5. These are compulsory sales in which Government cannot intervene and, if the reported arrangement is carried out to a conclusion, we will find ourselves faced with a second Wadi Hawarath for which reason I bring the matter to your notice.
6. I would add that Mr. Hankin of the Jewish National Fund agrees that my information is substantially correct.

[Signed] J. N. Stubbs
Director of Lands

33. Zirin Village Land Sales (1 October 1930)

Husayni, Hilmi. "Regarding Sales of Zirin Village Land." Letter. 16 Aug. 1930. MS. Israel State Archives. Jerusalem. Box 3511/1

No. 287/268

District Commissioner's Offices
Haifa
1 October 1930

Confidential
Chief Secretary,
Jerusalem

Subject: Zirin Village
Reference: Your 3761/30 or 8.9.30

The Administrative Officer Nablus confirmed the state of affairs at Zirin village recorded by the Director of Lands.

I quote an example of the transactions described. Yusuf Effendi Abdul Karim borrowed from the Jewish National Fund in July 1930, the sum of LP 350, repayable in August 1930. When the debt fell due, Yusuf by arrangement failed to pay, and the Courts on application ordered the sale of the land mortgaged as security. This was acquired by the highest bidder, Mr. Hankin, for LP 350. It is believed, however that the figure was privately adjusted to LP 750 per share.

The arrangement relieves the vendor in some degree of the odium that would attach to a voluntary sale to the Jews, while the purchaser escapes the restrictions of the Protection of Cultivators Ordinance, 1929, and possibly those rising from prior rights of purchase. In addition, the fictitious sale price is likely to affect the future valuation of the land for purposes of taxation.

The tenants, ploughmen and laborers at Zirin with their families are estimated at some 900 souls, and the shares at the disposal of the tenants have dwindled from 74 to 11. They are, therefore, obliged to rent land from the 'Abd al-Hadis. If 'Abd al-Hadi shares are transferred to the Jews, this resource will, of course, be lost to them, and a considerable landless population will result.

As the (Nablus) Area Officer points out, the tactics adopted at Zirin may become general throughout the country, and the position would then be very serious. It would, therefore, appear necessary for Government to consider legislation to safeguard cultivators' rights and prior rights of purchase affected by forced sales of land through the Execution Officer.

[Signed] A.N. Law
For Acting District Commissioner

Copy to: Director of Lands
Administrative Officer, Nablus