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 SUPREME MOSLEM COUNCIL,
 JERUSALEM.

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27th December, 1934.

His Excellency
 The High Commissioner,
 Government Offices,
 Jerusalem.

Your Excellency,

In the year 1929 Government appointed a Committee, which has since been known as the Johnson - Crosbie Committee, for the purpose of reporting on the economic conditions of agriculturists in Palestine and the fiscal measures of Government in relation thereto. This Committee submitted in the following year a detailed report in which it explained the desperate position of the fallah and the necessity for taking immediate measures for his relief. Based itself on accurate statistics, this Committee estimated, inter alia, that the fallah in general needs 100 dunams of land to enable him to maintain himself by the usual extensive cultivation. The Committee further stated that the total area of land in Palestine will be insufficient for the Arabs, were it distributed amongst them according to this estimate. In 1930, the Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry confirmed, indirectly, this view, and in consequence, His Majesty's Government deputed Sir John Hope Simpson, one of its greatest experts, for the purpose of reporting on immigration, land settlement and development. This expert reported, inter alia, that "an area of at least 130 dunams is required to maintain a fallah family" and that "the whole of the cultivable land available in Palestine would not afford such an average were it divided amongst the Arab cultivators". Government thereafter appointed another expert, namely Mr. Lewis French for the purpose of study-

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ing the situation and applying the theories of Sir John Simpson. Mr. French completely confirmed these theories and expanded them, but notwithstanding all the above, Government has failed to take any serious measure with a view to safeguarding the interests of the Arabs which, according to the conclusions arrived at by the bodies mentioned above, will be impaired unless Government take an effective measure to avoid such danger by stopping the alienation of Arab lands.

2. Indeed, the Jews themselves have confirmed this argument, but in a different way. Mr. Harkin, the only Jewish expert in questions of land in Palestine, stated in a letter which he addressed to Sir John Hope Simpson and reproduced in his report, in reply to a statement made that the Arabs do not own any land of which they can dispose without causing real harm to themselves, that at the date of his writing (July 1930) there existed an area of not less than 100,000 dunums of which the Arabs can dispose without causing harm to themselves and that after the transfer of this area from the Arabs, it may then be stated that the position of the Arabs would deserve consideration and attention, in order to avoid any harm which may be caused to them.

3. The Annual Reports of Government show that an area of nearly 120,000 dunums were transferred from Arabs to Jews and the disposition thereof actually registered in the Land Registries between that date and the end of 1930. If we add to this area other exceedingly large areas of land which were transferred to Jews and registered in their names in the year 1934, (we have not as yet obtained an exact figure of the area of such land) and other lands which were sold to Jews by agreements of sale, which could not be avoided owing to the heavy penalties prescribed

General of Land
in agreement
for sale

therein, the area of which is not less than double the area mentioned above, it will appear that the danger of the transfer of land from Arabs to Jews is now imminent and does not require any proof, even according to the admission of the Jews themselves.

4. On the other hand, the Jews, moved by the fall in the value of the Palestine currency and by other considerations, are now purchasing from the Arabs small holdings at alluring high prices to the extent that they strip away Arab families of all their lands and thus these families become landless and a burden on the community.

5. In dealing with such dangers in countries other than Palestine, His Majesty's Government either enacted or caused to be enacted laws which are calculated to prevent, at least, the transfer of an area of land sufficient for the maintenance of a family, by any means and for any reason. It enacted the Five Feddans Law in Egypt and a similar law in the Punjab Province, India, although the conditions in these countries were not so serious as in Palestine and although the vendors there are not bound by political obligations not to alienate the land which they purchase and not to employ any other labourer to work on the land, as the Jews are bound in Palestine.

6. It may be observed, in this connection that some of the Arab landowners own areas of land which exceed 150 dunams each. But this observation will appear to be of no importance when it is remembered that the cultivators in the lands of such Arab landlords are landless and that the transfer of these areas, or the majority thereof from Arabs to Jews will lead to the deprivation of Arab cultivators from their source of living. Indeed, this situation arises nearly every day in the different parts of Palestine irrespective of the provisions of the

No parallel
The F. F. Law is not
comparable to the F. F. Law
in India.

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The Cultivators
& Landless
Dunams

Protection of Cultivators Ordinance which proved to be of no real value to such cultivators, owing to the various deceptive means which the Jews use in order to induce such cultivators, ignorant as they are and unable to appreciate their future, to evict the land which they cultivate and to forego their tenancy rights.

7. In these circumstances, the Supreme Council wishes to draw Your Excellency's attention to the fact that the failure of Government to take any effective measure with a view to combatting the danger which threatens the Arabs as a result of the alienation of their land is inconsistent with the terms of Articles 4 and 6 of the Palestine Mandate which forms the basis of the Palestine Administration and that the breach of this law, according to which the present Government is established, and the failure of Government to remove the detriment of such sales the existence of which is irrefutable and which is clearly shown in the Official Reports referred to above are liable to lead the Arabs to despair and despondency. We are confident that Your Excellency will not deem it advisable to allow such despair to find its way into the hearts of the people, especially in the presence of such calamity which is expanding and the number of the victims of which is increasing every day.

We therefore beg to request Your Excellency to consider favourably the following demands:

- (1) that the Palestine Government should enact a law which will prevent the sale of land from Arabs to Jews, owing to the insufficiency of the land which now remains in the possession of the Arabs and which is insufficient for their immediate needs;
- (2) that the Palestine Government should enact a law which will prohibit the transfer of any plot of land to any person whatsoever if the owner thereof

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will not retain for himself a number of dunams which, as stated in the Report of Sir John Hope Simpson, is the minimum area of land required for the maintenance of an Arab family, namely 150 dunams.

With highest respects,

(Signed) Mohammad Amin.

President,
SUPREME MOSLEM COUNCIL.