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American Zionist Emergency Council, Christian Council on
Palestine, 1944-1946.

PRESS RELEASE from

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL ON PALESTINE

70 Fifth Avenue

New York 11, New York ALgonquin 4-2720

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHRISTIAN LEADERS, IN TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, REFUTE
ANTI-ZIONIST ARGUMENTS OF ARABIC-SPEAKING GROUP

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POLING, NIEBUHR, ATKINSON, FRIEDRICH, HARLOW, LESOURD, VOSS, PHILLIPS
DECLARE JEWISH COMMONWEALTH PLAN IS ENTIRELY DEMOCRATIC

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A telegram refuting anti-Zionist arguments expressed recently by the Conference of Americans of Arabic-speaking origin and declaring that "the Commonwealth plan, as set forth by the Zionist organizations today, is entirely democratic in purpose and spirit," was sent to President Roosevelt today by a group of prominent Christian leaders. The telegram was signed by Dr. Henry A. Atkinson, General Secretary of the Church Peace Union, Dr. Carl J. Friedrich, Professor of Government at Harvard University, Professor S. Ralph Harlow, of Smith College, Dr. Howard M. LeSourd, Dean of the Graduate School, Boston University, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, of the Union Theological Seminary, Dr. Daniel A. Poling, President of the World's Christian Endeavor Union, Rev. Wendell W. Phillips, Christ Church, Rye, N. Y. and Dr. Carl Hermann Voss, Extension Secretary of the Church Peace Union.

Asserting that the democratic ideas which had been expressed by the conference of Americans of Arabic-speaking origin in a message to President Roosevelt "obviously do not reflect the concepts of the Palestine Arab political leaders, who have talked -- and acted -- in terms of Arab domination," the Christian leaders pointed out that the Mufti of Jerusalem, chief Arab political figure in Palestine during the last quarter of a century, "is now reported in Berlin at the side of Hitler."

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"Jewish labor has turned malaria-ridden wastes in Palestine into productive farms and has transformed what was once a poverty-stricken province of the Turkish Empire into the major industrial center in the Near East. The Jewish effort has brought about a phenomenal increase in the native Arab population, in striking contrast with the situation in nearby Arab countries," the telegram said.

The text of the telegram follows:

"As American Christians who are deeply interested in the Palestine question, we take the liberty of submitting our views on the telegram sent to you by the Conference of Americans of Arabic-speaking origin, which met in New York City several days ago. According to a dispatch in the New York Times of November 28th, the telegram urged you, Mr. President, to withhold your support 'from any final settlement of the Palestine problem which does not accord full justice to the natives of the land.'

"The Conference of Americans of Arabic-speaking origin represents the view largely of Christian Arabs from Syria who have been resident in this country for many years. The democratic ideas expressed by these leaders obviously do not reflect the concepts of the Palestine Arab political leaders, who have always talked -- and acted -- in terms of Arab domination.

"The chief political figure in Palestine during the last quarter of a century was the Mufti of Jerusalem, head of the Moslem hierarchy, fomenter of riots in Palestine, collaborator with the Axis, who is now reported in Berlin at the side of Hitler. He and the Palestine Arab Executive have always called themselves the 'owners of the country,' have refused to accept any proposal which tended 'to place them on equal footing with the alien Jews,' and have rejected every legislative plan which did not repudiate the internationally-sanctioned Mandate for Palestine. The outstanding leader of the nationalist faction, Auni Bey Abdul Hadi, has the same point of view. In evidence before the Royal Commission on Palestine in 1936, he arrogantly declared: 'We do not accept the formula laid down by the Jews that there should be no domination by Jews over Arabs or by Arabs

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over Jews.' Palestine, as far as he was concerned, was an exclusively Arab country and therefore the Arabs had the absolute right to rule and to dominate. These views, with their inlay of fascist spirit, have never been repudiated by any official Palestine Arab political body.

"It is absurd to say that Arab Palestine has 'accepted' Jewish immigrants and refugees. Jews have come into Palestine during the last twenty-five years despite the intransigent opposition of the Arab political leaders. They have not come by consent of the Arabs, but by the sanction of international law in accordance with the League of Nations Mandate and with the approval of our own Government by act of Congress. The absorption of several hundred thousand immigrants has been made possible by the investment of Jewish capital and by dint of self-sacrificing labor on the part of Jewish pioneers. Jewish labor has turned malaria-ridden wastes in Palestine into productive farms and has transformed what was once a poverty-stricken province of the Turkish empire into the major industrial center in the Near East. The Jewish effort has brought about a phenomenal increase in the native Arab population, in striking contrast with the situation in nearby Arab countries.

"The Arab Conference itself points out that the future of the Jews is a world problem. It is for that reason that the Allies after the last War, with the approval of the League of Nations and the United States, set aside Palestine as the Jewish National Home, as the place where, with due regard for the needs and rights of the native population, the Jews would be permitted to develop a great center of Jewish life where they may live as a nation 'as of right and not on sufferance.' The Commonwealth plan, as set forth by the Zionist organizations today, is entirely democratic in purpose and spirit; it fully guarantees equality of rights for all individuals regardless of faith and nationality and allows, to an extent far more liberal than in most existing democratic countries, for the religious, cultural and educational freedom of minorities. We believe that the Jews, who have themselves suffered so much as a minority, can be trusted to carry

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out these principles sincerely and fully.

"We submit these observations to you, Mr. President, in the fervent hope that victory for the democratic cause will bring justice to the long-suffering Jewish people, and that the new and better world which we pray will emerge from the chaos of this war will find Palestine internationally guaranteed by the United Nations as the National Homeland for the Jewish people.

"Sincerely yours,

Dr. Henry A. Atkinson, General Secretary
of the Church Peace Union
Dr. Carl J. Friedrich, Professor of
Government at Harvard University
Prof. S. Ralph Harlow of Smith College
Dr. Howard M. LeSourd, Dean of the
Graduate School, Boston University
Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, of the Union
Theological Seminary
Dr. Daniel A. Poling, President of the
World's Christian Endeavor Union
Rev. Wendell W. Phillips, Christ Church,
Rye, N. Y.
Dr. Carl Hermann Voss, Executive Secretary
of the Church Peace Union."



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#128 - 12/6/44

January 29, 1946

Dr. Karl Herman Voss, Secy.
Christian Council on Palestine
70 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, N. Y.

My dear Dr. Voss:

I have just had occasion to look through the "Truth About Palestine" which the Christian Council in Palestine has published. I want to congratulate you on an excellent job. It is timely, forthright and authoritative, and I hope that the pamphlet will receive wide circulation among the Christian circles.

It should also be placed in our principal libraries throughout the country.

With all good wishes, I remain

Most cordially yours,

AHS:GR

January 29, 1946

Christian Council on Palestine
70 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

I would appreciate if you would send me 100 copies
of your brochure "Truth About Palestine" which I
would like to distribute in and around Cleveland. If
there is any cost involved, please send me the bill.

With all good wishes, I remain

Very cordially yours,

AHS:GR