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Reader's Scope, 1944.

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ANOTHER REPORT ON PALESTINE

Perhaps no important issue of our time has been so beclouded and oftentimes distorted as that of the Mandate of Palestine. Untruths and half-truths have been freely used, sometimes in an effort to blanket it as a problem, sometimes to dismiss it.

Yet, today more than ever before, it is important to the entire world, to every nation and community, because Palestine now stands as a symbol of what the world can do to assure people whose lives have been uprooted by fascism that they, too, can look with hope toward a free and democratic future.

To throw some clear light on Palestine, *Reader's Scope* requested four prominent Americans, none of them Jews, to present a short, factual report on the whole question.

The White Paper

Johannes Steel

THE Palestine White Paper of 1939 contains three vital "don'ts": (1) Don't permit the Jews of Palestine self-government; (2) Don't permit them to buy land freely; (3) Don't permit Jews outside of Palestine to enter Palestine.

The last provision is of immediate concern. This ban on immigration extends to all Jews, everywhere. Under it Palestine becomes the one country, outside of Nazi-occupied Europe, where Jews are excluded because they are Jews. Yet Pales-

tine is the Jewish National Home, so named 22 years ago by the League of Nations. Following Britain's famous Balfour Declaration of 1917 the League conferred the Palestine Mandate upon Britain in these words: "The Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home."

Another clause in the Mandate, under which the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League declared the White Paper illegal, says: "No person shall be excluded from Palestine on the sole ground of his religious beliefs."

But the League is defunct and the White Paper remains in force.

Taking the Mandate at its word, in two decades Palestine Jewry has produced one of the most provocative, exciting societies in the world. Through the application of devo-

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tion and elbow grease a barren wilderness was conquered.

This passion for work and self-help has stood the United Nations in good stead. The Jews of Palestine have sent over 30,000 volunteers, or six percent of the population, into the British forces. There were Palestinian Jewish suicide units in Eritrea; there are Palestinian Jewish engineers manning the fortification and transportation systems of General Montgomery's famous Eighth Army, first in Egypt and now in Italy.

On the home front, Palestine war production has skyrocketed by 274 percent. \$42,000,000 worth of vital war materials was produced by Jewish factories in 1942 alone.

In the words of labor leader David Ben Gurion, Palestine "is fighting the war as if there was no White Paper, and fighting the White Paper as if there were no war."

The Colonial Office defends the White Paper on the grounds that

the Palestinian Arabs are afraid of Jewish domination. Yet the Arab population has almost doubled since 1919. Compare the figure with the static rates for Arab Transjordan, or the 13 percent increase for modern Egypt. And the Arab population has increased specifically in areas of Jewish settlement and development. In Jaffa, near Jewish Tel-Aviv, there has been a 60 percent increase—in isolated Nablus, the increase has been 8 percent.

Admittedly the British are having difficulty controlling the Fascist-Arab world. And when neighboring Arab notables use Palestine as a bargaining point, it is understandable that the British should listen.

But Palestine is not a part of the British Empire. British rule in Palestine was established through a League of Nation's Mandate. The protection of the Jews in Palestine is, therefore, the joint responsibility of the democratic United Nations.

The United States and Palestine

Dr. Daniel L. Marsh

THE Christian people of the United States have always had a keen interest in Palestine, and a large proportion of them have always had a lively interest in the possible return of the Jews to Palestine. One reason for this interest is that Palestine holds the shrines most sacred to the Christian's heart: Bethlehem of Judea, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee and its environs, the Jordan River, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, Jeru-

salem and the hill outside the city's walls.

Certain American Christians of the fundamentalist type used to favor the return of the Jews to Palestine because their faith, born

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of a literal acceptance of Biblical phrases, held that the return of the Jews to Palestine would be a prelude to what they called "the second coming of Christ." It must be said that this group was never very large, but it has been vocal in the proclamation of its faith.

Across all the years also, many persons have favored the return of the Jews to Palestine as a matter of good common sense, both psychological and social sense. The second President of the United States, John Adams, is recorded as having said to the American Jewish statesman, Major Noah: "I really wish to see the Jews again in Judea, an independent nation." The idea expressed by John Adams has remained alive in America until the present hour. Thus in 1891, following anti-Semitic pogroms in Eastern Europe, a memorial was presented to President Benjamin Harrison, urging him to use his good offices with governments of Europe "to secure the holding of an international conference to consider the condition of the Israelites and their claims to Palestine as their ancient home and to promote the alleviation of their suffering conditions." This memorial had been presented by Rev. Mr. Blackstone, a Christian minister, and it antedated the first Zionist Congress by six years. The memorial bore the signatures of such important leaders as the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, members of Congress, religious and industrial leaders such as J. Pierpont Morgan, John D. Rockefeller, Cyrus W.

Field, Russell Sage, and many others.

President Woodrow Wilson, than whom America has never had a greater President (except possibly Abraham Lincoln and George Washington), endorsed Great Britain's Balfour Declaration which favored "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people." This policy was unanimously approved, in 1922, by our government in terms of a joint resolution of Congress, signed by the President of the United States.

Following the Balfour Declaration, the Palestine Mandate was approved at the Versailles Peace Conference and ratified by the League of Nations. President Wilson took with him to the Versailles Conference a document prepared by a committee of American experts which recommended "that the Jews be invited to return to Palestine and settle there," and that the League should "recognize Palestine as a Jewish state as soon as it is a Jewish state in fact."

I have been in a position to learn something of current American opinion on this subject. I know that it is by no means unanimous, and yet I honestly believe that a large majority of Christian Americans would today, if they could, make Palestine available to the Jewish people as a national home for the sake of providing an asylum for oppressed Jews in Europe, as well as providing a "home land" to which Americans of Jewish inheritance can point back with an increasing sense of self-respect.

Rescuing Hitler's Victims

Senator Robert F. Wagner

THE events of the past year have brought increased tragedy to the Jewish people. The total number of Jews dead at the hands of Hitler's henchmen is now estimated at more than 4,000,000.

Americans have been aroused by this wholesale slaughter and have been pressing for concrete action to speed the rescue and rehabilitation of the remnants of European Jewry.

Part of that pressure has resulted in the creation of the War Refugee Board and the establishment of a "free port" for approximately 1,000 refugees at Ft. Ontario in Oswego, New York. Many more of these free ports should be set up as quickly as possible to provide havens of refuge for those who can still be saved.

Americans have also been pressing for unlimited Jewish immigration into Palestine. In view of the unprecedented crime against the Jews of Europe, the efforts of decent men must be redoubled to insure justice.

.Because the need was so urgent, Senator Taft and I introduced a bipartisan Palestine resolution in the Senate on February 1st of this year. The resolution called on the United States to "take appropriate measures to the end that the doors of Palestine shall be opened for free entry of Jews into that country, and that there shall be full opportunity for colonization so that the Jewish people may ultimately reconstitute Palestine as a free and

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democratic Jewish commonwealth."

A resolution identical with ours was introduced a few days earlier in the House. In both houses of Congress the resolutions received immediate support from the Majority and Minority leaders.

It seemed that the Palestine resolutions would pass overwhelmingly until news came that the Army insisted on postponing action. Congress had to defer action, but the executive made a telling move. On March 9th, President Roosevelt announced that "the American government has never given its approval to the White Paper of 1939," and that "when future decisions are reached, full justice will be done to those who seek a Jewish National Home."

This statement paved the way for the strongest statements of principle yet to come from Americans on the issue of Palestine, its people and its function — the recent Palestine planks favoring a Jewish Commonwealth in the platforms of both major American parties at their conventions in Chicago.

The official voice of America has spoken through its parties and its President. This war must result in an order in which the rights of peoples and communities will be guaranteed.

For European Jews this must

mean the abolition of all anti-Semitic laws, the recognition of their full civil rights. No country should be considered a democratic nation that does not guarantee the same democratic standards for its Jews as for all other citizens.

The Jewish people have long been denied these rights. They ask

of us that they be counted in the ranks of tomorrow's society of free nations—that all the non-repatriable Jews or those who seek a Jewish homeland be allowed to build freely and democratically a Jewish Commonwealth in the land which the world has designated as the Jewish National Home.

The Land and the People

Dr. Walter Clay Lowdermilk

IN THE course of a conservation study for a Congressional Subcommittee in 1938-39 I traveled 18,000 miles in the lands occupied primarily by the Arab peoples of the Near East.

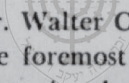
I found that land which had once supported millions, as evidenced by ruins of great cities, was now poverty-stricken and eroded. The Arab farmer who was never given a square deal by his rulers did not give a square deal to his land.

In the midst of this general decline I found three hundred Jewish agricultural villages that were scientifically restoring the land of Palestine to a high degree of productivity. In these villages, and wherever Jews had settled, there was a love of the land that we in this country need if we are to save our own soil from destruction.

In swamps they have dug drainage ditches to remove the dangers of malaria. On slopes apparently washed bare of soil they have stubbornly planted shade and fruit trees. The withered fields have been resown. Covering only 6% of the total area of Palestine and 14% of the cultivated area, these Jewish

villages are great experimental plots that show what can be done not only in Palestine but in the entire Near East.

The Jewish cooperative settlements of Palestine are organized in an elastic fashion which enables

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them to absorb great numbers of refugees quickly. It trains them, former doctors and lawyers and businessmen, to establish new villages or to work in industries.

This feature of the agricultural settlements must interest all students of the European Jewish refugee problem. How much room is there for those European Jews who may want to go to Palestine?

Among the factors which determine the upper limits of a country's absorptive capacity are the genius and skills of the people themselves. And these skills the

Jews have in abundance. They have concentrated the abilities of their most highly skilled engineers and technicians upon the problem of providing food and labor for a maximum population. If all the unoccupied or underpopulated areas of Palestine were rejuvenated as but 6% of the land has been, it is almost impossible to estimate what the carrying capacity of Palestine would be.

As for the fertility of Palestinian soil, the geologic structure, geographic setting and climate have combined to make it unusually productive. Palestine is very like California, except for Palestine's added advantages of great limestone springs and better soils. The Holy Land was beautifully terraced and farmed in Biblical times.

Full utilization of the land base depends upon power—and the site of the Jordan Valley offers an opportunity for the construction of one of the most striking and unique power and irrigation projects in the world. The idea is simply this:

The Dead Sea lies in a trough 1300 feet below sea level. It occurred to me that the waters of the Mediterranean could be drawn to produce a great power project, using the Dead Sea as a huge evaporation pan. The Jordan River flows

into the Dead Sea. Thus, Palestine has three bodies of water which, by proper juxtaposition, could provide power and irrigation on an immense scale. By diverting the waters of the Jordan and its tributaries away from the Dead Sea two purposes would be accomplished: 1) the waters of the Jordan would be tapped for irrigation; 2) the evaporation in the Dead Sea would be replaced by Mediterranean waters which, conducted through a canal and tunnel from the coast, would maintain the Dead Sea at its present level. The water thus conducted would have to be dropped 1200 feet into the Jordan Valley and the fall would be converted into electric power in hydro-electric plants.

Adoption of such a plan will make possible the absorption not of thousands but of *all* those European Jews who may want to go to Palestine in addition to the 1,500,000 Arabs and Jews already there. The Jordan Valley plan has been proved practicable by expert investigation.

The absorptive capacity of a country changes with the ability of the population to make the maximum use of its land and to put its economy on a scientific and productive basis. The Jews *have* done this in Palestine.

*Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side.*

— JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

☆ Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself, and the more he tries to conceal himself the more clearly will his character appear in spite of him.

— SAMUEL BUTLER