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American Christian Palestine Committee, 1945.

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UNITED STATES SENATE
Washington, D.C.

May 18, 1945.

Dear Senator:

The American Christian Palestine Committee is requesting the Senators to sign a letter to President Truman, in which it is urged that immediate steps be taken to open Palestine to Jewish immigration and pave the way for a democratic Jewish Commonwealth.

We have considered the reintroduction of the resolution, which we offered in 1943 and 1944, but we have decided that a letter of this kind to the President is better at this time.

In the war in Europe, which has happily come to a close, the United Nations had no more vigorous and sacrificing Allies, in proportion to their numbers, than the Jews of Palestine. They gave their lives and their wealth to further the war against Hitler. Now that the peace is in the making, it appears that the Jew again may be made a football of power politics, but this, in the interests of the welfare and freedom of mankind, must not continue. Palestine as a homeland has been promised to the Jews, and they need and deserve it now.

We feel that this subject should be brought as forcefully as possible to the attention of the President, and urge our colleagues to sign this joint letter.

Very sincerely yours,

Robert F. Wagner

Robert A. Taft

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AMERICAN CHRISTIAN PALESTINE COMMITTEE
41 East 42nd Street, N.Y.

File

May 18, 1945.

The American Christian Palestine Committee, expressing widespread Christian conviction, believes that every effort must be made now to fulfill the international promises made to the Jews concerning their national homeland in Palestine.

The Nazi regime in the course of its monstrous campaign of systematic murder and torture has almost annihilated the Jewish communities of Europe and for millions of Jews, the end of the war in Europe comes too late. Horrible disclosures concerning the Buchenwald, Maidanek, Oswiecim and other prison and concentration camps have shocked the civilized world. Hitler waged his war against the helpless Jews of Europe with a barbarity and determination which we in this country have only now begun fully to realize. At this moment we must do all we can to insure justice to the remnant of European Jewry and make impossible a repetition of this tragedy.

Therefore, we are asking you and the other members of the Senate to sign the enclosed letter addressed to President Truman as a current reiteration of our traditional national policy. The party platforms of both Republicans and Democrats affirm their support of the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization so that in accordance with the full intent and purpose of the Balfour Declaration, Palestine may be constituted as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth.

Your support through the signing of this letter will be greatly appreciated by Americans who are deeply concerned about justice for the Jews and the peace of the world.

For your convenience an addressed stamped envelope is enclosed for the return of the signed letter.

Thanking you for your cooperation, we are

Helen Gahagan Douglas
National Secretary

Howard M. LeSourd
Co-Director

Carl Hermann Voss
Co-Director

CTB

PALESTINE—

Test of Democracy



DR. EDUARD C. LINDEMAN

*Professor of Social Philosophy,
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Christian Council on Palestine	70 Fifth Avenue	New York 11, N. Y.
American Palestine Committee	41 East 42nd St.	New York 17, N. Y.

I AM a fairly recent convert to the idea of a Jewish state, having resisted the appeal of this movement for a great many years. My faith in a pluralistic democracy was so strong that I was reluctant to admit that we could not easily absorb all the sixteen million Jews of the world in those countries which imagine themselves to be democratic.

I have not forsaken the idea that democratic strength comes from diversity, not from uniformity. The strongest democratic country is the one which can integrate within its citizenship the widest variety of personalities, the widest variety of types. You can get strength in other ways, as Hitler has demonstrated, but I believe in the superiority of that strength which comes *e pluribus unum*—through diversity toward unity, never without diversity.

I am still an assimilationist on the cultural level. I don't want the Jews to leave America. I don't want them to give up their search for unity from diversity here. I am a humanitarian, unabashed. I make no apologies for my deep concern for human welfare. And therefore I am concerned about the fate of Jewish people as people. But my final conviction of the necessity for a Jewish state has come about not so much because of my general concern for human welfare or my specific concern for the fate of the Jews as people, but because of the benefit that a Jewish state will bring to us who are not Jews. That is, I have finally come to see that democracy cannot fully succeed unless there is a Jewish state.

There are some very amiable Jewish persons in America who do not believe in this thesis. I do not argue with them when they tell me that every time you advocate a Jewish Palestine you announce to the world that there is a Jewish race, the existence of which they deny. I simply point out that if there is not a Jewish race, there is certainly a Semitic sub-race, according to all the anthropologists and ethnologists I have studied. But that is not the important

question. The question is, how do the people of the world regard the sixteen million Jews? Anti-Zionist Jews may insist that the Jews are not a nation, but only a religion. But certainly, they were once a nation, a national cultural group out of which came some of the most fruitful lessons of nationhood up until the time of Aristotle.

Anti-Zionist Jews, further, fear that when there is a Jewish homeland in the Near East, it will encourage anti-Semites in America to push the Jews out of the United States into Palestine. That there is no precedent for such a belief my own experience convinces me conclusively.

I grew up in this country as the son of an immigrant who had migrated from Denmark after the Prussian-Danish War. He escaped from a German prison and came to this country, choosing it out of all the world as the place in which he wanted to live and rear his family. We lived in a neighborhood in which the Scandinavian people were held in low esteem; in fact, we were the lowest group in the community. Of all the immigrant groups, the Germans were the highest and the Scandinavians were the lowest. Thus I was born and brought up and spent my early childhood and youth in an environment in which, if there was any segregation and demeaning of personality, they were practiced upon us; if there were any ugly names for children to be called, they were applied to us.

Did the Danish people in America remain degraded? Within my own lifetime I have seen them come to the level of great esteem in this country. And this was by no means due entirely to what the Scandinavians did here; it was due also to what was happening in their homeland. They had a homeland—a very little one, inhabited by fewer than three million people, a tiny little country jutting up into the North Sea, with very poor soil and almost no natural resources. But after the Danish revolution reports began to come back to this country of the creation in Denmark of almost a kind of modern Greece

—a small, poor people, but with no poverty, a people that had found a relative solution to its economic problems; a people more democratic than almost any other people in the modern world. Gradually the lustre of what was happening in the little country of Denmark began to shine upon those of us who were of Danish extraction here, and our integration in the United States was greatly aided by the growth of social democracy in Denmark.

This situation seems to me to have at least some relevance to the claim so often made, that if there is a Jewish homeland the Jews will have to get out of all the countries where they now are. That is a claim which seems to me absurd and defeatist, stemming not from statesmanship but from fear.

So much for the relationship between American Jews and a Jewish state in Palestine. As far as non-Jews are concerned, there seems to me to be a number of very cogent reasons—as many as nine distinct ones—why non-Jews should be heartily and thoroughly in favor of building up a strong Jewish state.

In the first place, there is a moral issue involved — a multi-faceted promise to be kept. It is a historic promise that resides in the spirit, the hearts, and the minds of Jews, and it will not die. Secondly, it is a promise internationally. The Balfour Declaration was not a statement of wishful thinking; it was a pledge, given by a responsible spokesman for the British government. And when Mr. Woodrow Wilson assented to Mr. Balfour's pledge, it seemed as though the American people had also begun to give their word. But we in this country did not trust to such slender affirmation: we went even further. We introduced a resolution in Congress in 1922, and the resolution was passed unanimously, stating that we were committed to the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. Unless these promises are revoked, anyone who opposes a Jewish Palestine does not stand on sound

moral grounds.

Second: I favor a Jewish state in Palestine because I want to bring dignity to all Jews everywhere. I believe that Jews all over the world will walk straighter and that all the furtiveness imposed upon them by their dispersion will disappear once there is a place which will ultimately be not merely an autonomous state but a sovereign state, with all the rights and privileges of sovereignty, brought into existence, managed, and supported by the genius and the labor of Jews. I know no other way of bringing dignity to a group situated as the Jews are. They must cease to be the only homeless people on earth.

Third: I believe that the Jewish homeland should be established now, before the war is over. This should be done in order to provide a solution for the very large group of Jews among the so-called uprooted people of Europe. The most recent and perhaps the most authoritative discussion of this problem, just published by the National Planning Association in a pamphlet called *Europe's Uprooted People*, comes to the conclusion after painstaking statistical study, that the total number of people who will be found after the war in places where they do not belong, and perhaps without statehood, passports and visas, will be 12,425,000. Of this number the percentage of Jews will be very, very high.

Where will these millions be resettled? Are Americans willing to take our pro rata share of them, regardless of whether they are Jews or not? We know in our hearts that we are not. Two of our largest pressure group organizations, the D.A.R. and American Legion, have already gone on record as being opposed to post-war immigration.

Now, I do not see how Americans can in one breath say, "We will not take these uprooted millions," and in the next breath, "Neither will we help anybody else furnish a place for them." This problem weighs very heavily upon my conscience, and I believe that all Americans

must accept moral responsibility for it.

Fourth: A Jewish homeland, I believe, will help solve the entire problem of minorities. If the Jewish minority can solve its difficulties, then all the other minorities will take hope and learn the methods, devices and techniques which have helped solve the Jewish question. If the Jewish question remains unsolved, then the status of all minority groups will continue to worsen.

The establishment of a Jewish Palestine may well show us how we can move masses of people to places where they will not create a new minority, and where they will be happier than under a distasteful sovereignty. If we learn enough about mass movements of people, it will not be so difficult to move hundreds of thousands and millions of people and to resettle them in places where they will not have the excuse of immediately starting some kind of an Irredentist movement preparatory to another war.

Fifth: The minority question is no longer purely European as it was after the last war. It is now an American disease, too, and we must help the rest of the world to solve this problem if we wish to avoid in this country the same kind of trouble which has bedeviled Europe for the last eighty to ninety years.

I have recently had some very disturbing experiences which had much to do with pushing me over from my former theoretical, philosophic position on the Jewish question. I took a trip this last winter, visiting eighteen American states in the middle west and the southwest, trying to find out what the mood and the temper of the American people was. I talked with all kinds of people—business men, trade-union leaders, workers, farmers. At the very beginning of my tour, in the city of Detroit, I became aware of something quite new in American life—the fact that large gatherings of working-class people were meeting in huge tabernacles, churches, stores, homes, under the leadership of ultra-fundamentalist millennial

preachers. Some of these are ordained and some not; many of the non-ordained ones, generally called jackrabbit preachers, have been quite common in the southwestern states and have now become very common in the north.

In all I attended some thirty-five of these meetings. After one of the first of them, in Detroit, where I heard the most blatant white-supremacy speech I have ever heard in my life—and I have lived for five years in the South—I began to study this movement, which I assume is now attracting some twelve to fifteen million people. It is a schismatic movement, Protestantism again becomes centrifugal, throwing itself into smaller particles.

I have heard these preachers preach many sermons against somebody. Their chief enemy seems to be Jews first; Negroes second; third, all white people who sympathize with Jews and Negroes; fourth, progressive educators; fifth, trade-union leaders; and sixth, their own denominations after they split with them. In one Texas city I heard a preacher openly advocate extermination of the Jews and assert that Hitler's solution of the Jewish question was the right one. By way of a positive program, all they ask for is authority—authority capable of keeping all the groups they don't like in their proper place.

Having seen the strength of this movement, its lavish use of newspaper advertising, the great hold it has on its adherents, the large sums it collects from them, I feel we can no longer assume that there cannot be a strong anti-Jewish movement in this country. It could be ignited very easily among these twelve to fifteen million so-called Christians. It is therefore for our own sakes as Americans that we must help to solve the Jewish problem.

Sixth: A Jewish National Home will not only bring dignity to Jews but remove from non-Jews the stigma of anti-Semitism. Unless we are rid of that stigma, it seems to me we can become neither Christian nor democratic.

Seventh: I am in favor of a Jewish Palestine because

I believe that only with its aid can the Near East be developed and enabled to support a huge population. Dr. Lowdermilk's *Palestine, Land of Promise* furnishes most convincing proof of this thesis. Considering the waste lands of Mesopotamia, Dr. Lowdermilk points out that five million people now live on a starvation standard where in antiquity thirty to fifty millions were maintained on a high standard, with a flourishing culture.

The energy, skill, and devotion which young Jews have brought to the building of Palestine demonstrate how the whole Middle East area can be expanded.

Eighth: Palestine is already a going concern. Why should we turn our backs on something which has been so successful that within the years of turmoil, when great capitalistic societies like England and the United States were almost having their death trial and suffering an unprecedented depression, Jews were building a new economic society upon new cooperative principles? Palestine is a pragmatic success, with an investment of a half billion dollars, a growing population, increased health, increased welfare even for the Arabs, rising standards of education, culture, art. I do not think it is too much to say that there is no other example in modern history of a state building itself, lifting itself by its own bootstraps and building itself out of its own human energy. There is no epic in modern history so magnificent as this Palestine experiment.

Finally, the Palestine question is the acid test of democracy. It is the acid test of the peace. A peace which leaves the Jewish question unresolved, will leave us who believe in democracy vulnerable to all the future Hitlers, all the malcontents, who will use this historic scapegoat to build up their nefarious movements. If we should enter into such a peace as leaves no room for the solution of the problem of which Palestine is the symbol, then there will be no peace.