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American Zionist Emergency Council, report of activities, 1946.

THE AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL

A REPORT OF

ACTIVITIES



1940 — 1946



Harold P. Manson

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE COUNCIL

THE establishment of the American Zionist Emergency Council dates back to the beginning of World War II. Late in August, 1939, the 21st Zionist Congress met in Geneva. Its work was conducted in the shadow of the impending catastrophe, and was indeed cut short by the sudden closing of the international frontiers and the need for delegates to return to their homes without delay. At a meeting of the World Zionist Executive held in those last tense days, attended also by leaders of the American delegation to the Congress, the implications of the war crisis for the immediate future of the Zionist movement were considered, and it was decided, for the period of the war, to set up a special Emergency Committee in the United States.

The Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs, as it was first called, was originally established with two purposes in view. The possibility was foreseen that, as a result of the war, the headquarters of the Zionist Organization in Jerusalem might, by reason of invasion or otherwise, be completely cut off from the rest of the movement. It was desirable, accordingly, that there should be in existence in America a body which could, if need be, assume the authority and the functions of Zionist leadership. But it was further recognized that, whether America entered the war or not, the attitude of that country was likely to be of decisive importance in determining the future of the Jewish National Home. With the eclipse of the Jewish communities of Central and Eastern Europe, the center of gravity for Zionism, outside Palestine, had moved clearly and unequivocally to the American continent. On American Zionists would now devolve duties and responsibilities, on the due discharge of which might well depend the fate of the Jewish people in Palestine. With this in mind, it was essential that an effective instrument be created, whose purpose it should be to bring home to the American public and to American political leaders the needs of the Jews as a people and the meaning of Palestine to the Jewish future. A major task of public relations, of political action and education was involved, requiring a concentration of all the available forces in American Zionism.

The first eventuality which the Executive had in mind in setting up the Emergency Committee was, happily, not realized. Despite periods of imminent danger, Palestine and the Yishuv remained safe during the war. Zionist communications by letter and cable with the rest of the Jewish world, outside of Europe, though subject to various wartime difficulties and restrictions, were maintained without interruption. In particular, the Zionist Executive in Jerusalem continued to function and from time to time sent out some of its leading members to guide and inform the movement abroad. It was, accordingly, on the second task—that of directing and coordinating Zionist public relations and policy in America—that the work of the Emergency Committee has been prima-

rily concentrated. The specifically American character of the Committee was emphasized by a change in title to that of the *American Emergency Committee for Zionist Affairs* (later contracted to "American Zionist Emergency Council"), as well as in the by-laws adopted in January, 1942. The Council today consists of twenty-six members. It comprises representatives of the Executive Committees of the Zionist Organization of America, Hadassah, Mizrahi and Poale Zion, together with a number of leading American Zionists nominated *ad personem*. The Council also includes a number of observers from other Zionist groups and from the members in America of the Zionist Actions Committee. In all, through its constituent and affiliated organizations, the Council represents bodies with a membership of more than 500,000.

A smaller Executive Committee which meets at frequent intervals carries on the business of the Council with responsibility to the full membership. In the initial period, Dr. Stephen S. Wise, Mr. Louis Lipsky and Dr. Solomon Goldman constituted a presidium at the head of the Council, and later Dr. Wise was nominated as its Chairman and Judge Louis E. Levinthal as Chairman of the Executive Committee.

During the earlier months of its existence, the Emergency Council functioned rather as an interparty body for receiving reports and for deciding on matters of common interest to the four constituent groups, than as the initiator and director of an active program of political action on the American scene. It was not till late in 1940 that a full-time Secretary was appointed and that the Council acquired offices of its own. The appointment, too, in January, 1941, of Mr. Emanuel Neumann as Executive Officer in charge of a Department of Public Relations and Political Action (a position from which he resigned in December, 1942), and of the late Rehaviah Lewin-Epstein as Director of an Economic Department, marked an important development in the work of the Council.

American Zionism Activized

However, despite the fact that a number of important activities were initiated by the Council during this period, it was clear that Zionist political and public relations work was not being carried forward on the American scene with the required scope and effectiveness. The need for an over-all program of action to activize the American Zionist masses of all parties, and for strong centralized direction was widely recognized by the leaders of our movement in Palestine, London and the United States. Consequently, a complete reorganization of the Council was effected in August, 1943 when, at the request of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, as well as of Dr. Stephen S. Wise who had been serving as Chairman of the Council, Dr. Abba Hillel Silver accepted the leadership of American Zionist political and public relations work. Dr. Silver

became Co-Chairman of the Council with Dr. Wise, and Chairman of the Executive Committee.

With the object of initiating an extensive nation-wide public relations program, the Council was thoroughly reorganized, a much larger budget secured and its staff and scope of operations greatly enlarged. A number of special departments were established, headed by experts in their respective fields, including those dealing with Information, Community Contacts, Publications, Speakers, Research, Christian Opinion, American Jewish Religious Forces, Special Events, Labor Relations, etc. Of special significance was the establishment throughout the country of more than 400 local Zionist Emergency Committees, representing all Zionist parties, which were organized for political action and public relations activity in every major American community, and all of which continue to receive regular direction and guidance from the New York headquarters.

Thousands of editorials in papers ranging from country journals to metropolitan dailies, and innumerable telegrams and letters which bolstered the Council's work in Washington, as well as large numbers of rallies, radio addresses and articles by Jewish and non-Jewish leaders, testified to the new vitality permeating American Zionism following the reorganization of the Council.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATIONS

Throughout its existence the Council has, through its representatives, been in communication with the Department of State in Washington (a permanent office of the Council, under the direction of Rabbi Leon I. Feuer, was established in Washington late in 1943), the British Embassy, or, on occasion, with the envoys of other foreign countries, in regard to various matters of political concern as they arose. Thus, representations were made and detailed memoranda submitted on such matters as the plan for the establishment of a Palestine Jewish Army; the questions associated with the transfer to Palestine of the 800 refugee children in Teheran to whom the Iraqi Government had refused transit facilities; the question of Jewish immigration into Palestine in general; and in particular the burning issue of the refugee ships — the *Struma*, the *Atlantic*, the *Patria* and so forth — with their tragic cargo of human beings fleeing the Nazi extermination camps; the repatriation of the Mauritius deportees; the Bermuda Conference; the question of Jewish representation at the San Francisco meeting of the United Nations; and, more recently, the demand for the immediate transfer to Palestine of 100,000 refugees from the German and Austrian camps; the indictment of the Mufti as a war criminal; and the question of the recognition of Transjordan as an independent state. Fundamental questions

concerning the political future of Palestine and its establishment as a Jewish Commonwealth were dealt with in comprehensive memoranda presented to the American authorities on a number of occasions. Among these were detailed statements submitted for the consideration of President Roosevelt and President Truman at the time of the Yalta and the Potsdam Conferences, respectively.

Among other matters with which the Council was concerned in the earlier part of the war was also the escape from unoccupied Europe of prominent Zionists who had obtained temporary haven in Soviet-occupied territory, in unoccupied France and elsewhere, for whom no possibility existed at the time to get to Palestine, and who were enabled to come to the United States. In this connection, the Council worked in close touch with the Chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Refugees. The attitude of the State Department in this regard, which had originally been one of willing cooperation, underwent a change in September and October of 1940, when a virtual stop was put to the issuance of Emergency Visitors' Visas. Subsequently, however, there was some modification in the attitude of the Department and a small but steady stream of permits was issued to Zionist refugees on the initiative of the Council.

THE BILTMORE CONFERENCE

The wider issues of the post-war settlement in regard to Palestine began to come to the fore as a result of the calling together, at the instance of the Emergency Council, of the Extraordinary Zionist Conference which was convened at the Biltmore Hotel in New York on May 9-11, 1941. The Biltmore Conference, which undoubtedly marked a milestone in the development of Zionist policy, was significant as the first representative gathering in many years of all parties in American Zionism, and its importance was enhanced by the presence of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, President of the Jewish Agency, and of Mr. David Ben-Gurion, Chairman of the Executive. In its concluding Resolution the Conference was responsible for a clear and important enunciation of Zionist aims and principles, which has subsequently become famous as the Biltmore Resolution.

AMERICAN JEWISH CONFERENCE

A further event of major importance in crystallizing and confirming American Jewish opinion on the Palestine issue was the inaugural gathering of the American Jewish Conference. The Conference, in the calling of which the American Zionist Emergency Council played an important role, met in the late summer of 1943, following several months of negotiations between Zionist and non-Zionist bodies. It constituted the first democratically-elected body, representative of the totality of American

Jewry and entitled to speak on its behalf, since World War I. The Conference was deeply concerned with the urgent problems of rescue and relief, but it saw them in their historic perspective, and devoted itself to the temporary as well as to the permanent solutions without sacrificing one to the other. The Resolution adopted by an overwhelming majority at the conclusion of the Conference, in effect registered the collective will of the Jews of America in support of the Biltmore Program. From that time on there could be no question that the Jews of America, as a group, were enthusiastically behind the Jewish Commonwealth program.

MASS DEMONSTRATIONS

At different times the Zionist Emergency Council has been responsible for the holding (alone or with other bodies) of a number of great public meetings. The first of these demonstrations was that at Madison Square Garden, New York City, in July, 1941, in connection with the desperate plight of the Jews in Nazi-occupied Europe. A similar gathering which drew a huge audience was held on the eve of the effective date of the White Paper, while another noteworthy mass rally, attended by some 60,000 people, took place in Lewisohn Stadium, New York, in April, 1945. Even this gathering was dwarfed, however, by a later open-air demonstration in Madison Square Park to protest British policy in Palestine, at which those present totalled more than 200,000. Such meetings in New York were generally followed or supplemented by other great gatherings in leading cities throughout the country. Further details on these and other demonstrations are included later in this report.

AMERICAN CHRISTIAN PALESTINE COMMITTEE

Associated with the American Zionist Emergency Council in its efforts to present the Palestine issues before the public are two leading non-Jewish groups: the American Palestine Committee, founded in April, 1941 under the Chairmanship of Senator Robert F. Wagner, and the Christian Council on Palestine headed by Dr. Henry A. Atkinson. The American Palestine Committee is composed of leading Americans distinguished in many walks of public life, who desire, through its medium, to signify their interest in and goodwill toward the movement to reestablish the Jewish National Home in Palestine. The membership of the Committee now exceeds 15,000, including 17 State Governors, 61 Senators, 150 Congressmen, as well as many others well known in the nation's civic and religious life.

The Christian Council on Palestine comprises a membership of 2,400 leading clergymen, representing all Christian denominations, and has taken an active part both in informing clerical groups and enlisting their support for the Jewish National Home.

In May, 1946, the two bodies merged as the American Christian

Palestine Committee. In addition to Senator Wagner and Dr. Atkinson as Founders and Honorary Chairmen, there were appointed as Co-Chairmen, Senator Owen Brewster, Senator James M. Mead and the Rev. Dr. Daniel A. Poling. Dr. Carl Hermann Voss was appointed as Chairman of the Executive Council while Dean Howard M. LeSourd continued as Director of the joint organization.

The members of these bodies have been kept informed, by the circulation of memoranda and other material, of developments in the Palestine situation, and they have on various occasions taken action in support of the Zionist position. The American Palestine Committee has held a series of impressive annual dinners in Washington, attended by many distinguished Americans, as well as by the representatives of various foreign governments. Of special interest, too, have been the well-attended all-day discussion meetings associated with the more recent of these functions. In addition, the American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council on Palestine have sponsored a number of outstanding regional conferences on Palestine in several of the larger American cities, notably in New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Detroit, Houston and Philadelphia. These were addressed by prominent speakers and were attended by many tens of thousands of persons. Reference may also be made to the successful inception, during the last two years, in conferences held at Princeton and Ocean City, of annual seminars for speakers and others specially interested in a deeper study of the problems involved.

An important action initiated under the auspices of the American Palestine Committee as one of its earlier activities was the issuance of a Declaration signed by more than two-thirds of the Senate and approximately two hundred members of the House of Representatives, reiterating support of the Jewish National Home. The Declaration, entitled "The Common Purpose of Civilized Mankind," was published in many tens of thousands of copies and received wide distribution. It constituted a valuable pointer to Congressional opinion in connection with the introduction at a later date of the Palestine Resolution in the United States Congress.

**Congressmen,
State Legislatures,
Governors
Pledge Support**

Again in 1944-1945, a "Letter to the President," urging action in behalf of Jewish settlement in Palestine and its establishment as a Jewish Commonwealth, was circulated among members of Congress and was signed by 55 Senators and 261 Representatives.

The growing public interest in the Palestine issue was further given expression by the passage of Resolutions by State Legislatures throughout the country in support of the Jewish National Home and of the reestablishment of the Jewish Commonwealth. No less than forty-one

State Legislatures, representing approximately 85% of the population of the United States, have adopted Resolutions along these lines.

This activity was supplemented by a Petition in similar terms signed by 40 State Governors and submitted to the President immediately prior to his departure for his historic conference with the British Prime Minister and Marshal Stalin in Berlin. The Petition was initiated under the sponsorship of Governor Moore of Utah, as Chairman of the Conference of State Governors, together with the Governors of New York, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

CLUB PROGRAM SERVICE

The American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council jointly sponsor a lecture bureau, "Club Program Service," which stimulates an interest in the Palestine question on the part of community, college, church and women's groups, as well as radio broadcasting stations throughout the country, and also provides these groups with effective lecturers.

Club Program Service has also fostered the development of prominent non-Jewish platform personalities, and today has several hundred pro-Zionist Christian lecturers available to audiences in the United States. In this fashion the British and Arab anti-Zionist propagandists have been counteracted, and the Zionist position presented effectively throughout America.

INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE ON PALESTINE

Early in November, 1945, there took place in Washington an International Christian Conference on Palestine, which was attended by representatives of no less than thirty nations. Among a number of distinguished guests who came to America to attend the Conference were Mrs. Lorna Wingate, widow of the British General, Orde Charles Wingate, and Senator Gonzalez Videla, recently elected President of the Republic of Chile. As a result of the Conference the "World Committee for Palestine" was established, with Sir Ellsworth Flavelle of Canada as Chairman. The World Committee for Palestine has been working in close association with the American Christian Palestine Committee and has concerned itself more particularly with the Latin American countries and Canada. The World Committee recently arranged for Dr. Gustavo Gutierrez, a prominent Cuban personality, who had become keenly interested in the problem of the Jewish people and of Palestine (which he has recently visited) to tour the South American countries, where he established many important contacts.

**AMERICAN
JEWISH
TRADE UNION
COMMITTEE
FOR PALESTINE**

Organized American labor, too, has made an important and positive contribution to the Zionist effort. Many labor leaders individually, as well as numerous trade unions, have placed themselves on record in support of Zionist aims. The American Jewish Trade Union Committee, headed by Mr. Max Zaritsky, has been especially effective in obtaining adherence to the Zionist program of the federated trade union groups. Indicative of the attitude of organized labor in behalf of Jewish aspirations in Palestine may be mentioned the following: On September 11, 1944, the New York State C.I.O. Conference adopted a resolution similar in terms to the Palestine Resolution then pending before Congress; on September 21, 1944 and October 23, 1945, the Ohio State Federation of Labor and the New Jersey State C.I.O. likewise adopted pro-Palestine resolutions; on November 13, 1944 the National Convention of the American Federation of Labor unanimously approved the Palestine resolution which was submitted to the Conference, and instructed its President, William Green, to use his good offices in behalf of the fulfillment of the purpose of the resolution. The Council of Industrial Organizations, at its National Convention, also placed itself on record in favor of the Palestine Resolution in Congress and the establishment of a Jewish Commonwealth.

PUBLICATIONS

The American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council have issued a considerable number of pamphlets which have been widely circulated. These include "The Voice of Christian America"; Sumner Welles' recent "Palestine's Rightful Destiny"; "The Arabs and Palestine" by Albert Einstein and Eric Kahler; "Before the Bar of History," a discussion of the Arab question by the Reverend Wendell Phillips; Professor Eduard Lindeman's "Palestine, Test of Democracy," and American editions of the Reverend Dr. Norman MacLean's scathing indictment of Britain's immigration policy under the White Paper, entitled "His Terrible Swift Sword," and of Victor Gollancz's "Nowhere to Lay Their Heads."

A large number of pamphlets were also issued by the American Zionist Emergency Council, and were distributed in many tens of thousands of copies to selected individuals and groups throughout the country. Some of these pamphlets are "Jews, Arabs and the Middle East" by Ephraim Broido; a legal memorandum on "Britain and Palestine" by Arthur Lourie; "We Do Not Want to Return to the Past" by Dr. Chaim Weizmann; "The Jewish Case," a statement prepared primarily for the delegates to the United Nations Conference in San Francisco; "Palestine in the Press"—being material from the American press of August 1946; Ernst Frankenstein's "Open Letter to Ernest Bevin"; an American edition of "Soldiers from Judaea," a description of the Palestine Jewish

Units by Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz, former Chief Chaplain of the British Eighth Army; and a jubilee edition of Herzl's "Jewish State." In addition, the Council has been actively concerned with the promotion of Ernst Frankenstein's "Justice for My People" (Dial Press), Professor Carl Friedrich's "American Policy Toward Palestine" (Public Affairs Press), Dr. Walter C. Lowdermilk's now renowned volume "Palestine, Land of Promise" (Harper's), and "To Whom Palestine?" by Frank Gervasi (Appleton Century).

The Council publishes, further, a monthly bulletin of information and opinion called "Palestine," which is widely distributed among government, academic and journalistic circles. The Council was also responsible for the publication in 1945 of an important volume, "America and Palestine," which gives the history of America's deep and continuous interest in the Jewish National Home over a period of many years. The book includes all important documents bearing on the subject and records the opinions of over 400 members of the Congress of the United States at the time—77% of the entire body—in favor of Zionist aspirations.

RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

A Research Department of the Emergency Council was established in 1943 headed by Dr. I. B. Berkson, who directed its activities until 1946. This department proved an important adjunct to the work of the Council. It has had the use on loan of the valuable collection of the Esco Foundation, and has itself built up an extensive collection of documentary material relating to Palestine. The Research Department publishes a monthly review of developments with regard to Palestine, entitled "Palestine Affairs," which has been enthusiastically received in academic and other circles. The Zionist Archives and Library have also proved an invaluable supplementary source of reference and research.

PALESTINE RESOLUTION IN THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

The most important step taken by the American Zionist Emergency Council on the political front was the introduction of the Palestine Resolution in both Houses of Congress. In 1944, the effective date of the White Paper guillotine on Jewish immigration into Palestine was approaching. Not only was it timely that the Congress of the United States should again, after an interval of nearly a quarter of a century, place itself unequivocally on record in favor of Zionist aspirations, but the very discussion of our problem in this great forum of public opinion was in itself a political event. The Resolution served as a target, further, on which the Council could effectively concentrate its propaganda. It was a step taken only after long and critical deliberation and after a systematic canvass of Congressional opinion, both through the Local Emergency Committees and through the Washington Bureau, had been

made. The introduction of the Resolution in the House of Representatives was preceded by warm statements of endorsement on the part of the leaders of both of the great political parties. Similarly, the introduction of the Resolution in the Senate, under the sponsorship of Senators Wagner and Taft, was preceded by strong supporting statements by both the majority and minority leaders of that body. Hearings took place before the House Foreign Affairs Committee for four days in the month of February, 1944. The Zionist position was presented with great distinction by the Zionist leaders, including Dr. Silver, Dr. Wise, Mr. Emanuel Neumann, Dr. Israel Goldstein, Mr. Herman Shulman, Mr. Louis Lipsky, Rabbi Wolf Gold, Mr. David Wertheim, Mrs. Moses P. Epstein, Dr. James G. Heller and others not directly associated with the Zionist organizations. The officially published reports of the Hearings, indeed, contain one of the most complete, well-documented and convincing statements of the Zionist case in existence. Magnificent support came from the Local Committees. From centers, large and small, throughout the country, hundreds of thousands of letters, postcards and telegrams poured in upon the Members of the Senate and the House. Congressmen were unanimous in stating that they had seldom seen such a remarkable expression of public interest in a piece of legislation.

**"Conspiracy
of Silence"
Broken**

One immediate result of all this was that the "conspiracy of silence" on the Palestine issue, which seemed to have developed in Washington, was effectively broken. Less than a year previously, there had even been the danger that an official demand might be issued, backed up by the authority of the chiefs of the Governments of the United States and Great Britain, calling for a cessation for the time being of all discussion of the Palestine question. This proposal had been shelved only after the most strenuous efforts on the part of the then leaders of the Council. Now, Palestine was definitely placed on the agenda of public opinion as one of the vital issues of the hour, and the justice of the case for a Jewish Palestine was brought home to the American people as never before.

Unfortunately, at a critical moment in the consideration of the Resolution by the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the War Department brought about a postponement of action on military grounds. It was nevertheless apparent to the National Administration that Congress was overwhelmingly in favor of the Resolution and that a large section of American public opinion was deeply concerned over the deferment of action on the measure. In response to this tremendous public pressure, the President, on March 9, 1944, issued what was the first clearcut expression of sympathy with Zionist aims to come from a leader of any of the great powers since the beginning of the war. The President

REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORMS

authorized Dr. Silver and Dr. Wise, Co-Chairmen of the Council, to issue in his name a public statement to the effect 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." The President's statement was the more significant coming as it did immediately following a series of protests to Washington from various Arab states expressing concern with the American attitude on the Palestine issue.

While Congressional action on the Palestine Resolution was for the time being deferred, the Council did not suspend its activities. In the summer of 1944 both the Republican and Democratic parties held their national conventions—prior to the national elections—and the Council therefore shifted its political front from Washington to Chicago, where these conventions were taking place.

In June, 1944, the Republican Party adopted a forthright plank on Palestine pledging unequivocal support to the full Zionist program. This was followed in July, 1944, by the Palestine plank in the platform of the Democratic Party, which put the party of the National Administration on record as follows:

"We favor the opening of Palestine to unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonization, and such a policy as to result in the establishment there of a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth."

These planks represented an act unprecedented in American political history and served dramatically to give notice that the American people were overwhelmingly in sympathy with the aims of the Zionist movement.

Subsequently, on October 15, 1944, in his historic message to the Zionist Organization of America, the late President Roosevelt gave his support to the plank in the Democratic platform and stated:

"Efforts will be made to find appropriate ways and means of effectuating this policy as soon as possible. I know how long and ardently the Jewish people have worked and prayed for the establishment of Palestine as a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth. I am convinced that the American people give their support to this aim and if re-elected I shall help to bring about its realization."

This position was reaffirmed by the President on March 16, 1945—very shortly before his death. Five weeks later, on April 20, 1945, President Truman authorized the issuance of a statement to the effect that he intended to carry out President Roosevelt's policy, with which he was fully familiar.

**REINTRODUCTION
OF THE
RESOLUTION:
RESIGNATION OF
DR. SILVER**

In October 1944, the military objection to the passage of the Congressional Resolution was withdrawn. In the light of the planks adopted by both the Democratic and Republican Parties, as well as of the statement of October 15 of President Roosevelt, it was decided that an effort should be made to reopen the matter of the Congressional Resolution which had lain dormant since the previous March. Before taking action in the matter, however, clearance for the Resolution was sought from President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Stettinius; but, instead of the expected concurrence of the Administration, vigorous opposition on the part of the President and Mr. Stettinius was encountered. Late in November the Taft-Wagner Resolution, as it was called, came up for action again in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, where it was considered at three successive meetings. The State Department and the President, however, remained obdurate in their position that the passage of the Resolution was inopportune. The matter came up for a vote in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on December 11, 1944. On this occasion Mr. Stettinius made the last in a series of personal appearances before the Committee, and, in the name of the National Administration, argued against its passage. Such pressure from the Executive branch of the American Government made it impossible to pass the Resolution, and it was finally tabled by a bare majority in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

A violent controversy had developed within the Council when the Administration's opposition to action on the Resolution was encountered. Some members of the Council thought it inadvisable to proceed with the matter and assured leaders of the Government that they would not press for the Palestine Resolution against the wishes of the Administration. Dr. Silver, supported by other members of the Council, took a different view of the situation. He felt that every effort should be made to induce the Administration to withdraw its opposition to the Resolution—which opposition was diametrically opposed to the stand taken publicly by President Roosevelt and his party.

Unfortunately, the proponents of these two different views also adopted conflicting procedures in Washington. Thus, while Dr. Silver sought to carry out the Council's decision to seek the removal of Administration opposition, other Zionist leaders informed official Washington that they were not pressing for the Resolution. Following the tabling of the Palestine Resolution, the far-reaching controversy within the Council culminated in the resignation of Dr. Silver from his position as Co-Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Executive Committee.

In the reorganization which followed, Dr. Wise was elected Chairman, and Dr. Hayim Greenberg became Chairman of the Executive

Committee, with the late Mr. Herman Shulman as Chairman of a small Administrative Committee.

The aforementioned controversy was not confined to the Zionist leadership, but also agitated the Zionist rank and file throughout the country. In the months that followed, the issues were debated throughout America and it became clear that the view represented by Dr. Silver—that favoring a program of militant political action to move the National Administration to follow a line in keeping with its own public pledges—was victorious in the arena of public opinion. The demand for a closing of Zionist ranks and for the recall of Dr. Silver to active leadership became ever more insistent, and finally, in July, 1945, there was a further reorganization. Dr. Silver and Dr. Wise became Joint Chairmen of the Council and Dr. Silver was elected Chairman of the Executive Committee.

PASSAGE OF THE PALESTINE RESOLUTION IN CONGRESS

The Resolution was subsequently reintroduced into Congress in somewhat revised form, and this time, after a further brief hearing in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, where the Zionist position was effectively stated by Mr. Emanuel Neumann, and after a full debate on the floor of the Senate, was at length passed by overwhelming votes on December 17, 1945, in the Senate and on December 19, 1945, in the House. The Joint Resolution concluded as follows:

“... Therefore be it RESOLVED by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That the interest shown by the President in the solution of this problem is hereby commended and that the United States shall use its good offices with the mandatory power to the end that Palestine shall be opened for free entry of Jews into that country to the maximum of its agricultural and economic potentialities, and that there shall be full opportunity for colonization and development, so that they may freely proceed with the upbuilding of Palestine as the Jewish national home and, in association with all elements of the population, establish Palestine as a democratic commonwealth in which all men, regardless of race or creed, shall have equal rights.”

The passage of the Palestine Resolution by the Legislative branch of the United States Government thus confirmed as an expression of American policy all of the aforementioned public statements in support of Zionism. The Resolution also served notice on the British Government, as well as on the American National Administration, that the American people, speaking through Congress, continue to regard the international pledge of a Jewish National Home as morally and legally binding, and will seek its fulfillment.

ATTITUDE OF THE ADMINISTRATION

Despite these striking expressions of official support for the Zionist position, it would be idle to ignore the fact that the Executive branch of the Government of the United States has not in the past been vigilant to secure that this sentiment of the American people and Congress should be reflected in action. Too often there has been an unfortunate contradiction between American official pronouncements favoring the Jewish National Home and concrete action towards their fulfillment.

Thus the declaration of the President of March 1944, that the United States had never approved the White Paper and that full justice would be done to those who seek a Jewish National Home, was not in fact followed by any official representations to the British Government. Indeed, as if to indicate that it was not to be inferred from this declaration that the American Government was embarking on a new policy towards Palestine, a telegram was sent by the State Department, with the approval of the President, to the heads of the Arab countries, renewing assurances previously given that no decision on Palestine would be reached without full consultation between both Arabs and Jews. Similarly, President Roosevelt's admirable statement to the Convention of the Zionist Organization of America of October 15, 1944, was not followed up by any action. On the contrary, as already indicated, when the Palestine Resolution was revived following the withdrawal of the objections of the War Department, strong opposition was encountered from the President and Secretary of State Stettinius. The matter was brought into the open in connection with the publication by Secretary of State Byrnes, in October, 1945, of the exchange of correspondence between President Roosevelt and King Ibn Saud. In dealing with this correspondence, the Emergency Council issued a widely publicized statement in which it was pointed out that, despite the unbroken chain of pro-Zionist promises and pronouncements on the part of the American Government, the policy they expressed had not been translated into action and that, on the contrary, by numerous acts and omissions on the part of the Administration the Arab leaders had been emboldened to allege that the American Government was, in fact, withholding its support from the Zionist cause. The statement of the Emergency Council, which was issued in the form of a letter to the Secretary of State, went on to review the situation in the light of the Ibn Saud correspondence and concluded by pointing out that the menacing words of the spokesmen of countries which had not lifted a finger in their own defense during the war should not be allowed to deflect the United States Government from a just course of action which had received overwhelming endorsement on the part of the American people.

It seems clear that not until late in August, 1945 did the United States Government take any action or make any representations to the

British Government, either to open the doors of Palestine to Jewish immigration or to live up to the obligations which it had assumed. In that month President Truman sent his now-famous letter to Prime Minister Attlee requesting that 100,000 certificates be granted for the immigration of Jews into Palestine. The first real step forward was thus taken in the direction of intervening actively in the Palestine situation and of putting an end to what had developed into a dangerous stalemate.

THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE AT SAN FRANCISCO

Representatives of the American Zionist Emergency Council played a very active part, in collaboration with the Jewish Agency for Palestine, in seeking to protect the rights of the Jewish people in regard to Palestine at the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in April and May, 1945. The Zionist representatives kept in close touch with developments in the Trusteeship and other relevant committees, and by establishing and maintaining contact with members of the key delegations, as well as by the circulation of specially prepared memoranda and other appropriate material, they kept the Conference delegates fully informed on the Zionist point of view. These efforts were successful, to the extent that a special safeguarding clause was eventually introduced into Article 80 of the Trusteeship Chapter of the Charter of the new International Organization, whose specific purpose it is to preserve existing Jewish rights under the Palestine Mandate. This does not, of course, provide an answer to the fundamental question regarding the political future of the Jewish National Home. Any decision on that question was outside the scope of the San Francisco Conference which was concerned with general principles and not with individual territories. At the same time the inclusion of the safeguarding clause was important, since without it the special rights and position of the Jewish people in regard to Palestine might well have been prejudiced by the statement of general principles laid down in the Trusteeship Chapter in respect to dependent territories as a whole.

ANGLO-AMERICAN COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY

In August and September, 1945, it became evident that the Labor Government was about to repudiate the promises to which, as a party out of office, it had committed itself over many years in connection with the Jewish National Home. On September 23, Dr. Silver and Dr. Wise issued a statement declaring that the Jewish people would resist to the bitter end the reported British decision to continue the White Paper policy. In order to give voice to the indignation of American Jewry at this betrayal of pledges, a demonstration was held at short notice at Madison Square Garden on September 30th, which was filled with a capacity audience of 22,000 together with a gathering outside of 45,000

**"Another
Time-Consuming
Investigation"**

more. Mass demonstrations were also held in approximately 30 other large centers throughout the country and in some cities the British Consulate was picketed. A month later a huge open-air demonstration (referred to earlier in this report) drew a crowd of 200,000 people to Madison Square Park.

At about this time reports appeared in the press to the effect that an Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry was to be set up to investigate the position of the Jews of Europe, as well as the situation in Palestine. On October 30, Dr. Silver and Dr. Wise, as Joint Chairmen of the Council, submitted a statement to the President from which, in the light of subsequent events, it is of interest to quote the following:

"Within the last seven years, three major intergovernmental Conferences and Committees, in addition to our own War Refugee Board appointed in 1944 and already dissolved, have sought to deal with the question of Jewish refugees and of Jewish immigration . . . Each of these efforts ended in dismal failure, stemming from the central assumption that the doors of Palestine, unlawfully barred to Jewish immigration by the British Government under the terms of its White Paper of 1939, must remain barred. . .

"We beg of you not to countenance further commissions and inquiries at a continued cost in human life and human misery, which can only ascertain facts already well known.

"What is urgently needed, is not another roving expedition or a further time-consuming investigation, but immediate concrete measures in conformity with a policy long established and clearly defined by valid international agreements. No inquiry can be acceptable which does not base itself on the internationally recognized right of the Jewish people to reconstitute their National Home in Palestine. For such an International Commission to set out upon its quest without reference to these basic legal and political considerations, is to embark upon a sea, without chart or compass, without a point of departure or a port of destination . . . It is evident that commissions are no substitute for action clearly indicated."

A further statement was issued by the Council on November 14, 1945, in response to the announcement of the appointment of the Committee of Inquiry and Mr. Bevin's accompanying remarks.

The Inquiry Committee opened its hearings in Washington in January, 1946. Dr. Silver was of the opinion that the Committee was a palpable delaying device and an excuse for inaction, and he therefore

urged that the movement should ignore the Committee and should not appear before it. However, in line with the decision taken by the World Zionist Executive to cooperate with the Committee, a full presentation of the Zionist case was made by representatives of the Emergency Council at the Committee's sessions in Washington. In addition to oral evidence by leaders of the Zionist movement in this country, printed briefs, including an excellent compendium of the relevant documents together with a brief running commentary, were submitted on different aspects of the problems with which the Committee of Inquiry was concerned.

In order to keep in touch with the work of the Committee of Inquiry as that body proceeded on its investigation in Europe and in the Near East, arrangements were made for representatives of the Emergency Council to attend the hearings of the Committee throughout its travels in an unofficial capacity, and to keep the Council informed of developments as they arose.

**Committee of
Inquiry's Report:
America's Reaction**

The Committee of Inquiry issued its Report at the end of April, 1946. Shortly before the publication of the Report, the leaders of the Emergency Council were apprised of its contents and it became clear immediately that while the Report had certain positive aspects—in particular a recommendation for the immediate transfer to Palestine of 100,000 Jews from the displaced persons' camps and the virtual abrogation of the White Paper—its long-term recommendations were not such as could commend themselves to the Zionist movement. In consequence of representations which were at once made in Washington, the President, in releasing the text of the Report, issued a statement which drew an important distinction between the immediate and the long-term recommendations. That statement formed the basis of further Zionist action in the United States until the new situation that was created by the adoption of the Resolution by the World Executive in August, 1946, expressing readiness to negotiate on the basis of a Jewish State in a part of Palestine. Thus on May 18, 1946, a telegram was sent by the Joint Chairmen of the Council to the Acting Secretary of State in connection with the new consultations which had now been proposed, urging that it be made immediately clear that the proposed consultations did not involve the recommendation of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry for the immigration forthwith of 100,000 Jews. The telegram expressed astonishment and dismay that despite the admittedly urgent need for action to relieve the tragic plight of the survivors of Nazi terror; despite the lapse, further, of more than eight months from the President's initial request to the Prime Minister for their entry into Palestine; and finally despite the unanimous recommendation in this connection of the

Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, it appeared that instead of immediate action to transfer the 100,000 to Palestine, the whole matter would be further delayed and confused under cover of the alleged need for consultation.

The same criticism was expressed in response to a written communication subsequently received from the Department of State (May 20) inviting the comments or suggestions of the Council with regard to the various matters discussed in the Report of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry. The Report, it was pointed out, in its recommendation for the immediate grant of 100,000 immigration certificates to Palestine, while confirming the request of the President, had merely reaffirmed the findings of Mr. Earl Harrison and of numerous other official investigators. It had in this respect added nothing to facts well known at the time of its appointment. In the circumstances, further consultations and comments appeared meaningless except to produce delay where immediate action was called for and to confuse where the issue had long been altogether clear.

Morrison Plan: American Reaction

On June 11, 1946, the President appointed a Cabinet Committee on Palestine and Related Problems. The Committee consisted of the Secretaries of State, of War and of Treasury, and its stated purpose was to assist the President in the "early consideration of the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry," in view of the urgency of the solution of various problems relating to the Jews in Europe and in Palestine. Thereafter, American technical experts were sent to London to work out with the British the logistics in connection with the transfer of the 100,000. And, finally, the Cabinet Committee dispatched its three deputy members, led by Mr. Henry F. Grady, to meet with a corresponding British group for the purpose of implementing the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry. The product of these discussions, however, was the Grady-Morrison report, which represented a radical departure from the recommendations of the Committee of Inquiry. The Grady-Morrison proposal for a scheme of provincial "autonomy" in Palestine, in which the Jewish people would be restricted to an area of some 1,400 square miles, and in respect of which Jewish immigration would still be subject to the over-riding decision of the mandatory power, evoked the strongest reaction on the part of the Zionists of America. Immediate and energetic action was undertaken in Washington and under pressure of an aroused and indignant American public opinion, the President was dissuaded from giving American support to the scheme.

In expressing American Jewry's vigorous demand for immediate

action to admit the Jewish survivors of Europe into Palestine, the Council received magnificent cooperation from the Jewish War Veterans of the United States. Almost 5,000 veterans of World Wars One and Two converged on Washington on July 14, 1946 in a protest march against British policy in Palestine. The veterans' parade in Washington and their meetings with President Truman, Under-Secretary of State Acheson and Lord Inverchapel, the British Ambassador, were widely reported in the press, in newsreels and over the radio. This demonstration contributed greatly towards the mobilization of American public opinion in support of Zionist demands.

THE MOST RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

A few months prior to the recent elections of November 5, the Emergency Council launched a nationwide program of action to demonstrate American Jewry's deep dissatisfaction over the National Administration's record on Palestine. A special committee—the Zionist Actions Committee—was formed, with Judge Bernard A. Rosenblatt as chairman, Louis Segal as treasurer and Rabbi Max Kirshblum as secretary, to conduct a program of mass education with regard to the National Administration's failure to act in accordance with its pledges on Palestine. It was clear that in voicing the demand that the American Government immediately fulfill its commitments regarding Palestine, the Emergency Council was supported by an overwhelming majority of the American people.

The results of this campaign were reflected in the steps which the Administration took during the month of October, 1946. On October 4, President Truman issued a statement in which he declared that "substantial immigration into Palestine cannot wait a solution to the Palestine problem and . . . should begin at once." The President said further that due to widespread American opposition to the Morrison plan he could not give his support to it. Referring to the Jewish Agency's proposal for "the creation of a viable Jewish state in control of its own immigration and economic policies in an adequate area of Palestine instead of in the whole of Palestine," President Truman expressed his belief that "a solution along these lines would command the support of public opinion in the United States," and went on to say:

"I cannot believe that the gap between the proposals which have been put forward is too great to be bridged by men of reason and good will. To such a solution our Government could give its support."

American Zionism's reaction to this declaration was contained in the Emergency Council's statement of October 9. That statement declared:

**"Public Expressions
Do Not Suffice"**

"... we most earnestly and respectfully urge the President to make full use of the influence and authority of his high office to the end that effective action be taken without delay in fulfillment of the spirit of his statement. Nothing can satisfy the public conscience save the early movement of displaced and homeless Jews into Palestine, the prompt cessation of British assaults on Jewish refugees and a halt to the brutal repression practiced in Palestine. This alone can be accepted as an earnest of a new and constructive policy resolutely to be pursued with all the vigor which the critical situation demands . . .

"Unhappily, past experience, the bitter disappointments and disillusionments which have followed upon earlier pronouncements have ripened into the conviction that public expressions, however sincere and well-meaning, do not suffice. It has become evident that the tragedy of a whole people exposed to bestial persecution, mass slaughter and continuing homelessness cannot and will not be remedied unless our Government exert sustained and vigorous effort to secure swift and favorable action to the end that heartening promises shall be realized in deeds."

On October 25, Secretary of State Byrnes was moved to make public a statement denying that the State Department was not giving full support to the Palestine policy stated by the President. In a letter to Dr. Wise, Mr. Byrnes declared that "the statement made by the President on October 4th with regard to Palestine and to Jewish immigration into Palestine is, of course, an expression of the policy of this Government. With this policy I am in hearty accord."

However, American Zionism's demands for concrete action by the American Government continued unabated — and on October 28 President Truman issued the text of his letter to King Ibn Saud, in which he declared: "It is only natural . . . that this government should favor at this time the entry into Palestine of considerable numbers of displaced Jews in Europe, not only that they may find shelter there, but also that they may contribute their talents and energies to the upbuilding of the Jewish national home."

The President furthermore rejected Ibn Saud's accusations against the Jews, declaring that he is "convinced that responsible Jewish leaders do not contemplate a policy of aggression against the Arab countries adjacent to Palestine." He rejected also Ibn Saud's charge that the President's statement of October 4 was inconsistent with the position he had taken earlier.

Thus, for the first time, the unwarranted interference of King Ibn Saud in the Palestine situation was dealt with in a forthright manner by the President of the United States.

AFTER THE ELECTIONS

On November 5 the Republican Party was victorious at the polls. Republicans now control both Houses of the Congress of the United States and will hereafter occupy an important role in determining American foreign policy. The Republican Party's record of support for Zionism has been consistent, and its present leaders include some of the most vigorous champions of the Zionist cause in the world today. It is hoped that their warm statements of the past will now be followed by efforts to bring about action by the American Government in support of the Jewish people's just demands.

CONCLUSION

The unbelievably tragic events of the past decade have placed upon American Zionists a fateful responsibility for the future of the Jewish people and of Palestine. There can be no doubt that the Jews of America as a whole are deeply conscious of the historic role which they have been called upon to play. In the decisions that are to be taken affecting Palestine, the influence of the American Government and of American public opinion may well be decisive.

The American Zionist Emergency Council has sought to channelize and make effective not only the mass sentiment of American Jewry for Palestine, but also the great fund of sympathy for the development of the Jewish National Home which exists amongst large circles of the American people as a whole. It will be the purpose of the Council to continue so to inform and educate American public opinion that the latter will lend to the aim of the establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth the weight of its great moral and political authority.

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