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37

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336

Soviet press and Zionism, 1946.

AMERICAN ZIONIST EMERGENCY COUNCIL
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MEMORANDUM

To Mr. Harold P. Manson

Date November 7, 1946

From Arthur Lourie

I enclose herewith Minutes of the Report by Dr. Jacob Robinson, of October 22, 1946, on the question of the press of the U.S.S.R. and Zionism.

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THE PRESS OF THE U.S.S.R. AND ZIONISM

Minutes of a Report by Dr. Jacob Robinson at the offices of the
American Zionist Emergency Council, October 22, 1946

DR. ROBINSON: A few preliminary observations may not be out of place.

First: A survey of the reactions of the Soviet press to the problems of Palestine and the Near East can be of value only if it is based on an analysis of all the available material, and not merely on haphazard selections of Soviet journalism. I believe that I have in fact covered practically all the ground for a period of fifteen months, from July, 1945 to September, 1946. Thus a check has been made first on all the Soviet newspapers and magazines which are received by various quarters here in the United States; and the available sources were then re-checked with the help of the bibliography of the magazine: The Propagandist. This is the organ of the so-called Agitprop, which is the Soviet office for propaganda and agitation of the all-Union Communist Party. The Propagandist is published bi-monthly and contains references to all the important articles on foreign affairs in the Soviet press.

Second: A few words on some of the publications used for this survey. Reference will be made to an article on the Arab League published by World Politics and World Economics. This magazine was for years the leading organ of the so-called Communist Academy of Science (merged a few years ago into the all-Union Academy of Science). Then there is the bi-weekly New Times. The importance of New Times, a magazine published in Moscow in four languages, lies in the fact that it is the successor to the Communist International. In 1943 the latter journal was stopped, but a few months later a new magazine appeared in its place entitled War and the Working Class. With the end of the war its title was again changed to the New Times. The New Times is now the guide for all Communist parties, as regards the nature of Soviet foreign policy. The names of the Soviet dailies Izvestiya and Pravda will be familiar to you. As regards Trud (Work), that is the organ of the Trade Unions. Significantly no original information or articles on the Palestine problem can be found in the only Yiddish tri-weekly Einikeit, the organ of the anti-Fascist Committee. It is also significant that not before February 1946, was any editorial comment to be found on our problem in the Soviet dailies or weeklies.

Third: The conclusions to be drawn from this survey may usefully be checked against acts of the Soviet Government in regard for example to the right granted to Polish Jews in USSR to opt for repatriation to Poland; or the toleration -- for a certain period of time -- by the Soviet occupation authorities of "illegal" emigration to Palestine from its zone of influence.

The first impression that a reader gets is one which is very familiar to experts on Soviet affairs -- namely the terrible uniformity in the nature of the information obtained from various sources. It almost degenerates into a kind of cliché which is repeated time and again. This uniformity certainly stems from Agitprop and is a consequence of the very idea that public opinion should be guided along the lines taken by Agitprop in all matters of interpretation of foreign affairs; and it undoubtedly makes Soviet policy a policy which is very simple, official, and easily understood.

The second impression is one of shock at the misinformation -- misinformation of a kind which one would have thought could not have been printed at all.

Of various examples I shall quote a few. In a paper for instance like Izvyestya (which is the official organ of the Government of the Union of the Soviet Republics so that the ideas expressed therein are highly official) an article on the Palestine problem was published on May 30, 1946. It is interesting incidentally to note that this is the only article on Palestine affairs which was reproduced in Einikeit (issue of June 1, 1946). Normally, we in America expect that the Jewish press would devote more time to Palestine affairs than the non-Jewish press. In the Soviet Union just the opposite is true. Ever since 1937, (I must excuse myself for making these digressions because the matters are not well-known) there have been no special newspapers or magazines in Russian on Jewish affairs. But the overwhelming majority of Soviet Jews today know only one language -- Russian -- so that for the last ten years their exclusive source of information on Jewish affairs would be through the general Russian press. On the other hand for those who do read Yiddish the only newspaper in Yiddish for a Jewish population in Russia today of some 2,000,000 is Einikeit; but it is useless to look for information on Jewish affairs in that paper.

Coming back to the article in Izvyestya, here is the kind of information you find:

"The head of the Palestine Jewish Agency, Dr. Weizmann, declared on May 14, 1946 that this year or next a provisional Jewish Government will be established in Palestine and this Government will be based on the Jewish armed forces in Palestine. This Government will open an immigration of at least 1,000,000 Jews in the first year of its existence."

V. B. Lutsky in his report on Palestine on July 17, 1946 stated: "Palestine is industrially one of the most backward countries in all the world" (Trud, July 19, 1946). The idea of the backwardness of Palestine is one of the pet themes of the Soviet press. However, the New Times (June 1, 1946) had the courage to say that "economically, Palestine is one of the most advanced countries of the Arab East." This is the only deviation from the cliché of Palestinian backwardness found in all these numerous articles.

Some other examples of misinformation are to be found in K. Serezhin's article "Contemporary Palestine" in the New Times of August 1, 1946, which I understand was circulated to you. (This article was ignored by the Communist press here, but was reproduced in Bulgaria's Jewish weekly Yevreiski Vvestnik of August 18, 1946):

"In 1920 a Jewish Foundation Fund was started on the contribution of big Jewish capitalists which, together with the Jewish National Fund formed earlier, largely provided the means for the creation of agricultural settlements of Jewish immigrants in Palestine. The regime of these settlements is such that the settlers are kept in life-long bondage, and in complete dependence on the powers-that-be. The 'collective way of life' was the specious slogan which enabled the organizers of the immigration to maintain complete control over the settlers."

The following information is given about re-emigration:

"In 1923, 7,420 Jews entered Palestine while 3,500, or 47% of this figure, left the country; in 1927, there were 5,000 departures as against 2,713 arrivals (187%). Even today, after the war

and the Nazi terror in Europe and in spite of the very intense propaganda in favor of Jewish settlement in Palestine a distinct desire is to be observed among certain sections of the Jewish immigrants, and especially among the laboring element, to return to the 'old country in Europe.'"

One more gem:

"By creating extensive privileges for the big capitalist organizations which control Jewish immigration into Palestine, the British authorities helped them gradually to oust the Arab peasants from the most fertile lands. The Jewish agricultural communities, supported by subsidies, possessing farm machinery and united in monopolist organizations for the sale of their produce, have become serious competitors to the Arab peasant, the fellah, with his primitive implements of tillage and his almost medieval agrarian and property status."

One more "informative" quotation from the same article:

"The settlements have been turned by the reactionary leaders of the Zionist movement into an instrument of propaganda of race hatred and chauvinism, into hotbeds of anti-democratic agitation, while large funds from Zionist sources have been used for the creation of military squads and armed terrorist groups."

It is a special technique of this uniform press never to quote newspapers by name but only to say "the German press," "the English press," "the French press," "the Arab press." For instance, in the article of Izvyestya of May 30th I quoted just now, at least two paragraphs start: "The Arab press considers ..." "The Arab press holds ..." "Arab commentaries declare..." (New Times, June 1, 1946). But it is interesting that only in one of these 12 or 13 articles did I find reference to "the Jewish press" as if there is no Jewish press, no Palestinian press at all. It would be difficult to assume that the Arab press is accessible to Moscow and the Jewish press is not. You will probably recall the effort which was made in Palestine during the war by the so-called V League, (a union of a great number of Jewish organizations, some of them left-wingers, some of them right-wingers, to organize relief for the Red Army). It was quite a notable movement with thousands of members and with publications of its own. Two representatives of the Soviet Union (Michailov and Petrenko) were sent from Iran to thank the League for the various medical supplies and instruments that had been sent from Palestine to the Soviet Union during the war. There was indeed in Palestine as elsewhere very genuine enthusiasm at that time for the Soviet Union. This was combined with a somewhat veiled desire to win the good will of the Soviet Union for the future settlement of the Palestine problem. It appeared from the visits of Michailov and Petrenko to Jewish settlements that they had been reading the Palestine Post (See Sbornik Ligi V 1943, p. 98) and it would indeed be difficult to assume that the Palestine Post is not read in Moscow. I know in fact from first sources that all the Palestine press (including the Hebrew press) is received in Moscow. Nevertheless, the fact that despite the availability of all this press not a single Soviet writer takes notice of that press is certainly very important. It shows presumably that no great importance is attached to what the Hebrew press says.

Now in order to understand the Soviet Union's attitude to the Palestine

problem, I think it is necessary to recall certain important matters which are almost forgotten here. To the Russians Saadebad Pact, concluded in 1935 between Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq, and to which constant reference is made in their articles, though not directly by name, seems to be something of a nightmare. It appears now that the Soviet Union believes that this pact is on the way to being revived and since the authors of the pact made it altogether clear that it was directed against the Soviet Union, anything having to do with its revival is regarded as connected with the idea of some anti-Soviet concentration. The possible accession of Turkey to the Arab League is considered as equivalent to the revival of this Oriental pact.

"There have been even more definite pronouncements concerning the role which certain foreign circles wish to allot the Arab League. In the Turkish press, which only a year ago evinced but scant delight at the establishment of the League, voices have since been raised in favour of Arab-Turkish rapprochement. Furthermore, servile Ankara politicians have recently been making extraordinary efforts to include the Arab League in all kinds of combinations connected with the idea of an 'Oriental Alliance.' The Cairo correspondent of France Press recently reported that reactionary circles cherish the thought of using the 'Oriental Alliance' as a kind of buffer against the Soviet Union."
(New Times, February 1, 1946)

Referring to the agreements concluded between Great Britain and Transjordan on March 22, 1946 and between Turkey and Iraq on March 21, Izvyestya (March 31, 1946) comments as follows:

"It is worth while recalling that last year the press discussed the problem of attracting Turkey into a more or less close cooperation with the Arab League ... Under the new changed circumstances the rapprochement between Turkey and Iraq means the activization of the preparation of an Arab-Turk block ... The emergence of such a block would be a heavy blow to the aspirations of the Arab peoples toward unity and independence."

Coming now to the great interest shown in the Arab League and its background it is of interest to establish a number of facts. First of all, there is a certain evolution of opinion from July 19, 1945 to September 19, 1946. In July 19, 1945 when a learned article on the Arab League by L. Vatolina, came out in World Politics and World Economics a very detailed and objective picture was given not only of the Arab contribution to World War II but also of the anti-Allied activities of the Arabs. More than a half a page was devoted to the Mufti. Since that date, in all the new expressions of opinion on the Arab League, one thing is missing: any reference to the attitude and activities of the so-called "Arab Fascists," (in order not to hurt all the Arabs this euphemism is used). Not a single word appears about Arab activities against the UN during the war, nor is anything whatever said any more about the Mufti. Since July, 1945, the name of the Mufti has not been mentioned and the whole interpretation of history indeed seems to have undergone a radical evolution.¹ While in 1945 there was still a kind of a balance between Arab contributions and Arab activities against the UN,

¹According to a cable from Moscow to the New York morning daily, Morning Freiheit, of November 4, 1946, the Einikeit carried on October 15 a long article on the activities of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in a critical, if not to say, violent language.

from January, 1946 on there is not a single reference to Arab anti-Allied activities. On the contrary, you find an exaggerated picture of what the Arabs have done toward the winning of the war, a picture which certainly, even the British will not like. In the article of Serezhin, mentioned before, the language used is this:

"The British authorities did nothing to counteract chauvinistic and anti-popular propaganda of the reactionary Arab leaders. Although some of these leaders had obvious ties with German and Italian fascists, the British authorities encouraged everything that tended to foment national dissension, and only interfered when British interests in Palestine were directly threatened." (New Times, August 1, 1946)

In regard to the Arab League it seems that the Soviet Union has not made up its mind whether the Arab League is something to be welcomed or not, and indeed one of the young Russian historians, V. Lutsky, (Trud, March 19, 1946) referring to the League says that he is neither in favor of nor against the Arab League. This implies that the Soviets are going to follow a policy of "wait and see." Why? Because, he says, the Arab League consists of two elements, respectively, progressive and reactionary; and since he is not yet sure which element is going to be victorious he cannot make up his mind. Secondly, the birth of the Arab League is not a very legitimate one. The fact is recalled that after the Cairo meeting of Roosevelt and Churchill, the Arab League was born; and this sequence in time is interpreted as a sequence in interest.

"Some foreign observers at that time (March, 1946) connected the comparatively speedy conclusion of the final stages of the work of setting up the Arab League with the conversations which President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had at the beginning of 1945 in Cairo with the Arab leaders, especially with Ibn-Saud and Farouk I."

Soviet authors are still uninclined to believe that the Arab League is a spontaneous expression of the Arab powers themselves but that the Arab League is rather a factor of British policy. (Izvyestiya, March 31, 1946). But strangely enough, this statement is never made without qualifications. Lutsky quotes the Arab League decision on Palestine as being considered (by the partisans of the League) in line with the struggle for national liberation...

Soviet writers are very perturbed by policies of the Secretary General of the Arab League, Azzam-Pasha. On the one hand he made a statement to Tass on December 10, 1946 that the Arab League has no conflict with the Soviet Union and that consequently there is no ground for its participation in an anti-Soviet block. On the contrary, the national policy of the Soviet and its democratic tendencies are highly appreciated by the League and the democratic elements of the Arab world. But a month later he gave a lecture at the American University in Cairo in which he made anti-Soviet charges. In the Soviet press, Azzam-Pasha is sometimes represented as a dictator who has taken over all the power of the Arab states and who does not allow the Arab States to proceed as they would like in matters which concern them, and who does not allow them to bring up the Palestine affair before the UN; and further as one who did not protest the Anglo-Transjordan alliance...

Incidentally two recent articles on the London Conference fail to explain the reasons for the boycott of this Conference by the Palestine Arabs (Melechov in

Trud, September 27, 1946 and Leontyev in Pravda, September 30, 1946).

There is nothing new in the Soviet interpretation of the British position in the Near East. It is widely accepted and I think there are no special Soviet elements in it. It is, however, significant that the Balfour Declaration is represented as a British betrayal of the Arabs (New Times, August 1, 1946) and, naturally, the Zoologist Lord Balfour became a "Banker."

American interest in the Middle East is represented in a somewhat different way than that to which we are accustomed. We can understand reference to the American oil interests. We may also understand the references to America's interest in strategic communication. The Jewish vote plays its parts, too. But two other points are emphasized again and again as determining American policy. One is the tragic situation of the Jews in the American zone of Germany and the pogroms made by American soldiers on Jewish DP's. These it is alleged are of such a terrible nature that the Americans feel that they must do something for the Jews after having become the successors of Hitler ... Something must be done to show the world that they are doing something in favor of the Jews.

"Presumably, too, these (American) circles believed that participation in the Palestine Committee (Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry) and in the adoption of decisions ostensibly aimed at promoting the welfare of the Jewish people might help to some extent to divert world attention from the obviously unsatisfactory situation in Western zones of Germany in respect to denazification and the eradication of fascism." (New Times, August 1, 1946)

And the second, a very interesting element which is again not emphasized elsewhere is the allegedly "sharply conflicting interests of Great Britain and America in the Middle East." (New Times, February 1, 1946). This interpretation goes so far as to say that the whole problem of the admission of new immigrants to Palestine is part of an American attempt to locate a loyal and pro-American population there, which the British are not prepared to accept. (Pravda, September 30, 1946)

The Soviet Union is represented as the genuine friend of the Arab World:

"The attitude of the Soviet Union inspires deep respect in the countries of the Arab East, since it promotes the national liberation of these countries, secures a lasting peace among peoples and contributes to a progressive democratic solution of the national question in the Near East." (Trud, March 19, 1946)

The various national upheavals in the Near East, including the Arab anti-Jewish riots are described as inspired by the ideas of the October revolution:

"The Great October Revolution and the Lenin-Stalin national policy of the USSR exercised great influence on the development of the national movement in the Orient. The idea of national independence grows in popularity. A wave of national upheavals goes on in the Arab countries: 1919 in Egypt, 1920 in Iraq, 1920-1925, 1925-1927 in Syria, 1929, 1933, 1936-1938 in Palestine." (World Politics and World Economics, 1945, No. 7)

After this background of the Soviet concept of the whole Middle Eastern

position, we come now to Palestine and Zionism. We find here a number of themes which are not unfamiliar. One of the ideas constantly repeated, is the idea that the harmony in Palestine was disturbed by Zionism. What a wonderful country Palestine was. It was the ideal country in the world for all the religions and nationalities living together. It is interesting that such a statement should come from the Russians, who have a large literature on the internecine conflicts of the various Christian sects in Palestine where before World War I there existed the Palestine Society, which was a kind of imperial agency to foment strife between the various sects. Certainly the writers must be well aware of this, but nothing of the kind appears in their writings. Palestine was a paradise as long as there were no Zionists and no new Jewish immigration.

"For hundreds of years the peoples of Palestine, split though they were into dozens of different religious communities and sects, lived harmoniously side by side, sharing the vicissitudes of fortune, peacefully tilling the soil, trading and pursuing the craft." (New Times, August 1, 1946)

Zionism is nothing but an imperialistic tool, an ally of British imperialism (Lutsky). The British Government established 30 years ago contact with the "fanatical" Zionist organizations (Pravda, September 30, 1946). This point is taken up by every writer again and again.

"The settlement of Jews in Palestine through the medium of the Zionist movement pursued one main purpose, namely, to strengthen the rule in that country of the British who were in constant fear of Arab revolt. The Zionist leaders placed the interests of the Jewish people at the service of British imperialism for the promotion of the latter's political aims. Ben Gurion, Chairman of the Executive of the Jewish Agency of Palestine, declared at a Zionist Congress in 1938 (!) that anyone who betrayed Great Britain betrayed Zionism." (New Times, August 1, 1946)

The identification of Zionism with Imperialism must be viewed against the theory of the inevitable approach of the clash between imperialistic countries and the awakening nationalism of colonial peoples. Lenin drew attention to how many millions of people are still not yet emancipated and he listed all the colonial peoples as natural allies of the Soviet Union. At that time he came to a figure of something like 1,200,000 people on one side and 6 or 7 hundred million people on the other side. This idea that the colonial peoples are the natural allies of the Soviet Union is one of the pet ideas of the Soviet Union. The section of the Soviet Year Book entitled "Colonial Problems," emphasizes the great importance attached to Palestine in the series of colonial problems. In the years between 1921 and 1939 the Palestine problem was treated indeed as the most important colonial problem.

Alongside with its anti-imperialist bias, the discussion of the Palestine problem is marked by a definite Marxist anti-capitalist approach. Here are a few illustrations:

"Mass Jewish immigration was accompanied by special privileges for Jewish entrepreneurs and generous subsidies. The purchase of Arab land with the funds of several foreign Zionist companies was exploited to stir up anti-Semitism among the Arabs, a thing until then unknown in their history and contrary to their nature. No little was done in this direction by Nazi agents in the Arab

countries whom the British authorities, be it noted, made no great attempt to check. The chauvinism of the more reactionary Zionists helped considerably to foment enmity between Arabs and Jews. Secret terrorist organizations arose and were financed by the Zionist bourgeoisie, not Palestinian in most cases, but foreign. Throughout the history of the Mandate, Palestine democrats, Arabs as well as Jews, exerted every effort to unite the country with the aim of achieving its independence. These efforts failed because of the nationalistic intrigues of reactionary Arabs and Jews." (New Times, June 1, 1946)

Another example:

"Tel-Aviv is the product of Jewish capitalist immigration. It is a shadow city, a symbol, as it were, of the Zionist paradise. But its modernity and smartness are not matched by the other Palestinian cities. Tel-Aviv's expenditure on public services exceeds that of twenty-three other municipalities of Palestine put together. Haifa and other towns, on the other hand, present a picture of slums, dirt and poverty. This is especially true of the quarters inhabited by workers.

"The big capitalists who have monopolized the sale of fruits and vegetables make huge profits. Even during the war the annual sales of the Tnuvah Society which has monopolized the trade in agricultural produce in the Jewish sector, amounted to £1,000,000. Palestine's industry is completely under the sway of foreign capital. Palestine's financial affairs are controlled by a handful of banking corporations, mostly owned by British capital. The official bank is Barclays' (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas), London. It has virtual control of the country's currency... To strengthen their political domination in Palestine, the British did everything to counteract the development of mass democratic organizations and persecuted the trade union movement."

Finally, the academic magazine, World Politics and World Economics has this to say in the same vein: "What is the essence of the Palestine problem? England, after having published the Balfour Declaration, opened the way for Jewish immigration to Palestine, and its foreign policy in the Near East and Palestine leaned predominantly on the Zionist Bourgeoisie. The Jewish immigration was permanently growing..."

The legend of the Arab landless masses finds its way of course into the magazine World Politics and World Economics:

"The dissatisfaction with the English policy and Jewish immigration into Palestine was provoked first of all by the fact that Jewish colonists used to purchase land from Arab big land-owners and to chase away the Arab tenants, despite their great need for land."

Attention is also paid to the contention that "contrary to the direct purpose and intention of the mandate, there are to this day no representative institutions in Palestine." (New Times, August 1, 1946). Nothing is mentioned of the fact that there are municipalities which are organized more or less on

the lines of general suffrage; not a single word is said about the manner of the organization of the Jewish community. What is even more disturbing is the open sympathy for the Arab riots in Palestine of the pre-war years. The quotation from World Politics and World Economics (see page 6 above), almost literally reproduced in the New Times of February 1, 1946, is very significant. Approvingly the New Times (August 1, 1946) states:

"Under pressure of the Arab national movement, the British Government was compelled in 1939 to renounce the Balfour Declaration (Sic!) and to hold out the possibility of Palestine receiving independence in ten years, i.e. in 1949."

The Jewish activities against the British in 1945-1946 are represented as the struggle of the Palestine population against the colonizers. Not a single word is said about the specifically Jewish character of this resistance.

The next problem which I propose to discuss is that of a solution as suggested by the conformist Soviet press. It can be formulated in the following five points:

First: The Palestine problem has nothing to do with the urge to emigrate. If there is an urge for Jewish emigration that is a matter which does not concern Palestine. This idea underlies not only the discussion concerning the Arab world but -- what is more important -- the Soviet Union's attitude in the UN and in UNRRA is dictated by the same approach. In this respect there is an almost complete identity of views between them and the Arabs, though for reasons which are not identical. The Arab reasons are purely anti-Zionist. The Soviets are probably glad to please the Arab world, but their policies in the international organizations are dictated by their desire for the return of all the anti-Soviet elements (Poles, Balts, Yugoslavs) so as to prevent the formation of anti-Soviet concentrations abroad. The following is a characteristic utterance:

"...Foreign press observers call attention to the fact that certain American and British circles are trying to link up the Palestine problem with the question of the fate of the Jewish population of Europe. It is obvious that the creation of normal conditions of life and a future for the Jews of Europe does not depend on immigration into Palestine but on energetic measures for the complete eradication of Fascism, racial fanaticism and its consequences, on real help for the Jewish people." (New Times, February 1, 1946)

The second point is the contention that Palestine is an Arab country: "The overwhelming majority of the population of Palestine holds it to be an Arab country, but considers the Jewish residents as citizens with full and equal rights in a future independent democratic Arab Palestine." (Lutsky in Trud, July 19, 1946)

Point three: the solution is to be democratic. "The Palestine problem cannot be solved by imperialist methods. It is soluble only if the peoples of Palestine will take it in their own hands. The progressive elements of the country have long ago reached the conclusion that only on a democratic basis and with democratic methods can peace be secured in Palestine. The population of the country -- Arabs and Jews -- have freely and independently to determine the future of Palestine." (Lutsky in Trud, July 19, 1946). This "solution" bears a striking resemblance to the White Paper.

Point four is the evacuation of the British troops.

Criticizing the Arab League, Lutsky, eg., says:

"The League bypassed the cardinal fact that Palestine is under British domination... The League did not ... demand the evacuation of the British army from Palestine..."

Behind this demand is presumably the desire of the Soviet Union to create a vacuum which will enable it to penetrate into this area.²

And last, but not least, there is the interesting proposal for a provisional solution before the final solution -- namely by throwing the whole problem into the lap of the United Nations.

Criticizing the formation of the Anglo-American Commission of Inquiry, Izvyestya (May 30, 1946) says:

"In the democratic circles of the Near East it is generally held that the creation of this Commission was a direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations."

Lutsky condemns Great Britain and USA for their attempt "to solve the Palestine problem behind the United Nations." (Pravda, July 18, 1946).

The New Times (June 1, 1946) went even further:

"...This attempt of two powers arbitrarily to decide the fate of other nations... was not only in crying contradiction to the principles of international law, but sapped the very foundation of international cooperation and general security." And once more:

"They (the British and Americans) clearly manifested a desire to by-pass UNO by setting up an absolutely unauthorized Committee, and to ignore completely the wish of the people of Palestine."

Trud (September 2, 1946) said that the only way of preventing the "tragedy looming over" the peoples of Palestine was to place the entire issue before the United Nations.

The striking similarity of these solutions with those of our enemies cannot but disturb us deeply.³

Not a single word of sympathy for Jewish aspirations can be found in these numerous articles. In January, 1944 in Einikeit Sachne Epstein, an American Communist, who has since died, published an article called the "Renaissance of a People." In this article he makes the following very interesting statement:

²In his recent speech before the General Assembly of the United Nations Molotov urged the evacuation of British troops from Palestine.

³The question, Mr. Leontyev (writing in Pravda November 1st) declared, is one of whether "colonial domination" is to be abolished or whether "under the guise of a 'seemly' excuse the interests of the Arabs are to be sacrificed to the competition of imperialist forces for the domination of the Near East." (New York Times, November 2, 1946).

"Under the influence of the Fascist mass murders who in their majority have transformed the Jewish communities in ruins and mass cemeteries, large segments of the Jewish population abroad are becoming more and sympathetic toward the project of mass transfer of Jews in Palestine. Many see in this the only means of radical solution of the Jewish problem. It is obvious that no normally thinking and sincerely democratic man can be against it, that the Jews in Palestine should continue freely to develop their home which they have created by their creative endeavors on the basis of their stateshood. This is their absolute right. As a collectivity united by community of interests and purposes."

Rabbi Nurock who, as you know, spent some 5½ years, partly in jail, partly in forced residence, in the Soviet Union, told us what a thrill it was for the Jews in USSR to read this statement. But it is an isolated statement.

I think my report would not be complete if I do not say a few words about the connection or maybe the inter-dependence of the Palestinian problem with the Soviet views on Jewish DP's and on the future of Jews in Europe. These three elements are very closely connected and the answers given are logical and well thought through. To the European Jewish problem the answer is a very simple one: "You have to stay there." Why? Again I believe the explanation is simple but you will never hear it. In regard to southern Europe, especially Hungary and Rumania, the Soviet Union is very disturbed by the fact that the new regimes have practically no popular basis. Take just one example. In order to create a more or less acceptable Cabinet in Rumania, they had to bring in a man like Tartarescu who is known as a Fascist and an anti-Semite, a man who organized the first great pogrom in Rumania in 1938. On the other hand as long as the Red Army is in Rumania and Hungary, the Jews, it is generally accepted, have nothing to fear. The "Schutzjuden" of two centuries ago reappear; this time, however, their protector is not the prince but a foreign army. There is no hope of a great Communist Party, either in Hungary or Rumania. In Hungary the small holders are absolutely anti-Soviet but of course there is an element both in Hungary and Rumania which may be converted to Communism and that is the Jewish element.

I was satisfied from the very beginning in Paris during the conference to draw up peace-treaties with Italy and their European Axis satellites that we would have no help from the Soviet Union and, indeed, all amendments brought in in favor of the Jewish communities were voted down by the Soviet and the other five Slav countries. Why? The answer is obvious enough. There is one nightmare in the Soviet mind -- the nightmare of possible interference by the Western countries behind the line of Stettin-Trieste. This line is to be reserved for the influence of the Soviet Union. The Soviets are afraid therefore that by granting the Western powers a right to interfere in respect of alleged anti-Jewish acts, an excuse may be given to them to interfere generally in the affairs of the countries in their sphere of influence and this they do not want.

It is not my purpose today -- I think I may do it some other time -- to explain why the Soviet Union is so sure of itself that it does all these things and still thinks that the Jews will always and everywhere be in favor of the Soviet Union. I think they are satisfied that this is going to happen. Neither is it my purpose today to outline any strategy by which to handle these problems. I do not believe that they are simple problems. Certainly they cannot be solved easily. I have merely sought in an informal way to communicate to you things which are not generally known or are mostly, for one reason or another, kept in silence. The general attitude of the Soviet Union today recalls that of the

period before the beginning of World War II, when it was consistently anti-Zionist. This is not an isolated case of the Soviet policy. On the contrary that policy in all its aspects shows traces of a movement back to 1939: this is true in regard to literature, to film production, to every single aspect of Soviet policy. We are indeed witnessing a complete reversal of all the ideas that came up in the years 1939 to 1944. The basic and leading idea today is back to pure Marxism -- Leninism -- Stalinism. Away with all these basic errors of the opportunists and with those who are in favor of some westernization of the Soviet world! In other words, we are today faced with the same position with which we were faced in the previous years, but with one great difference: in the period of 1920 to 1935 the Soviet Union was absent from the League of Nations. Today the Soviet Union is not only not absent but is very much present in the United Nations and it may well be a decisive factor in some decision where a veto can frustrate everything. While we might have been indifferent to the character of Bolshevik propaganda in the years preceding 1939, that would certainly not be advisable today because it would mean to ignore a factor which cannot be ignored. How to deal with this situation is a very grave problem and which indeed I would like to have another opportunity to discuss.

In answer to a question, Dr. Robinson said that the greatest disaster that could happen to us would be official identification as a pro-Soviet force in the Near East. The difference between the situation of the Jews in Rumania and Hungary and of those in Palestine is that in Rumania and Hungary the Jews are not free agents and in Palestine, happily enough, they are still free agents.

Referring to the possible influence of the 30,000,000 Moslems in Soviet Russia on Soviet policy in the Middle East, Dr. Robinson said that the Soviet Union will never admit that it is guided in its foreign policy by some local interests and therefore no reference to local Moslems is to be found in its literature. The general concept of nationalities in the Soviet Union is that they are not in any way connected with their brethren living outside of the Soviet Union. The Jews, e.g. are Soviet Jews, (the Soviet-Jewish people.) Even the Science of Yiddish is different from that of other Jews and their so-called "Fascist Science of Yiddish." That did not mean that they were averse to making use of these outside influences, e.g. through anti-Fascist committees or the Orthodox Church abroad -- but they will not accept that these groups act in Russia in any way comparable to a "pressure group."

It was agreed that the Minutes of Dr. Robinson's report be circulated and that he be invited to continue the discussion at an early opportunity.

A.L.