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Neumann, Dr. Emanuel, 1947.

REPORT FROM LONDON

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Address of Dr. Emanuel Neumann, delivered at the extraordinary
American Zionist Conference, at the Statler Hotel,
Washington, D. C., February 17, 1947

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This is my first opportunity to speak to a gathering of American Zionists since the recent Congress. It is not my purpose of course to review that Congress which has now passed into history; much less to revive any of its controversies. I will not refer to its proceedings at all except insofar as such reference as may have a direct bearing upon our mission in London, which is the subject of my address this morning.

The Congress you recall was sharply divided on the question of Zionist participation in the London Conference on Palestine -- the Conference on Peace in Palestine, as it has been officially designated by the British Government. It was not a purely inter-party controversy for the differences of opinion at the Congress transcended party lines and existed to some degree within most of the fractions of the Congress. Indeed many individual delegates were divided in their own minds and carried on a sort of internal debate with themselves.

Difficulty of reaching agreement on the question derived from a deeper difficulty, that of arriving at a consensus regarding the precise nature and status of the political situation which confronted the movement. The conflict was essentially a conflict of viewpoints springing from different appraisals of the evidence before us, and the significance of that evidence.

On the whole the proponents of partition in the London Conference were more hopeful of results to be achieved through the process of reasoned argumentation, persuasion and negotiation, while the opponents of partition were decidedly less hopeful, or frankly pessimistic. The former believed that British policy was now in such a state of flux that it could be molded and restored to its original pro-Zionist shape; the latter believed that no basic change had taken place as yet, and that those who directed the British policy were no more prepared for a clean break with the White Paper and all that it stood for, than they had been a year or two ago. Some thought that the Morrison-Grady Plan was dead, the path was therefore clear for new conceptions and a more decent solution; while others contended that even if the Morrison Plan was dead the mentality which produced it was very much alive, and as much opposed to a pro-Zionist solution now as ever. Above all, the proponents of partition were strongly inclined to the belief that partition and the establishment of a viable Jewish State was definitely in the offing; others did not share that belief. The former feared that our refusal to participate in the Conference meant final and irretrievable rupture of our relations with the Mandatory Power fraught with disastrous consequences; while the latter maintained that our refusal to participate was fully warranted by the circumstances and would have a salutary effect by exposing to the world the true state of affairs, the complete absence of common ground between us and the Mandatory.

The resolution against partition in the Conference which was adopted by a fair majority, was in itself in the nature of a compromise, and left the door open: if and when there was a discernible change in the situation; if there were signs that the British Government had modified its hostile attitude and was prepared for a constructive solution which would respect Jewish rights and Jewish

aspirations. The Congress thus rendered its decision, but this statement does not complete the story. The decision left an important minority -- important both numerically and qualitatively -- deeply disturbed and gravely concerned over its possible consequences. Moreover the new Executive which was elected immediately following the Congress was a coalition executive in every sense of the term. It represents not only a combination of parties but a combination of divergent viewpoints as well. Such a coalition was inevitable in the circumstances. The inclusion of the three largest parties within the Executive was necessary in the interest of the Movement. And again in the interest of the Movement, in the interest of preserving its basic unity, it was necessary for the new Executive, despite these divergencies, to evolve a common line of policy within the framework of the resolutions adopted by the Congress. We were all in the same boat. Having assumed a joint responsibility, having shouldered a common burden, we had to reconcile our differences and approach our difficult task with a maximum of agreement.

In conformity with the decision of the Congress, we declined to participate in the London Conference. The Chairman of the Executive, Mr. Ben-Gurion, took an early occasion to convey this decision to the Secretary of State for the Colonies and to explain to him the grounds of our refusal. Simultaneously Dr. Silver, as Chairman of the American section of the Jewish Agency, conveyed the same decision and made the same explanations to the American Secretary of State, and to the British Ambassador in Washington. But we also took the position that the decision of the Congress did not preclude conversations from time to time between representatives of the Jewish Agency in their representative capacity under the mandate, and the British Government with reference either to the immediate problems or long-term policy, and this, too, was clearly conveyed to both Governments.

The immediate effect in England of the announcement of our non-participation in the Conference was, I believe, a wholesome one. There were none of the dire consequences which some had feared. The British press took note of it of course, and commented widely upon the stiffening of the Zionist attitude. Our stand was interpreted as indicative of an increasing dissatisfaction with British policy and a growing determination to offer political resistance to that policy. There were expressions of concern, and a renewed demand on the part of the press that the government should accelerate its efforts to end the impasse and achieve a permanent solution. The British Government on its part, received our decision understandingly, and took it in good grace. It made no further attempt to ensure Jewish participation in the conference by drawing in, as it might have done, representatives of other Jewish groups and organizations in place of the Jewish Agency; on the contrary, it promptly expressed its readiness to conduct informal discussions with the Jewish Agency, recognizing that it alone could speak and act effectively for the Jewish people in the matter of Palestine.

A series of five meetings, accordingly, took place in the Colonial Office, devoted to a full and free exchange of views between us and the spokesmen of the British Government, its Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bevin; its Colonial Secretary, Mr. Creech-Jones, attended by their advisors and assistants.

Our purpose in entering upon these discussions was a three-fold one: first to discover whether any change of official attitude had in fact taken place which might warrant our participation in the formal conference on Palestine; second, to explore once more whatever possibilities might exist, of reaching an agreement regarding a permanent solution; third, to discover more specifically whether the British Government was seriously prepared to consider a compromise solution along the lines indicated by the Executive of the Jewish Agency last summer, the

immediate establishment of a Jewish State in an adequate part of Palestine. This third point was of the highest importance also from the internal point of view, and the state of affairs within our Movement. The Basle Congress had definitely re-affirmed the full Zionist program, and it was agreed that we should take our stand squarely upon that program: the fulfillment of the intent of the Balfour Declaration, which meant the re-establishment of Palestine -- the whole it -- as a Jewish Commonwealth. But it was evident after the Congress, as before, that large and important sections of the Movement persisted in the passionate belief that a viable Jewish State in a part of Palestine was not a remote possibility, but an immediate likelihood; others, including our distinguished Chairman, were equally convinced to the contrary. Neither side could persuade or convince the other by force or logic. There were those who went so far as to feel, and to declare that it would be a crime against the Movement, and a crime against the Jewish people, to eliminate without further ado the possibility of such an immediate solution through partition. So strongly were these views and hopes entertained that there was real danger that the controversy would continue to fester and to divide the Movement, diverting our best thoughts and energies from the external struggle, to a prolonged internal struggle. There was no way to end this theoretical discussion, but to put the conflicting theories to the test. The attitude of the British Government could be probed once more: was it seriously interested in such a compromise solution, or was it not? If it was, and would be prepared to frame proposals along these lines, we would bring them to the Actions Committee, or the Zionist Congress for consideration. If not, at least the internal controversy would subside, permitting the Movement to unite its forces on a program of action, based upon realities, however harsh, rather than upon illusions, however attractive.

I cannot attempt to give a detailed account of our conversations within the brief span at our disposal, and there is much which I would not be free to recount here. I will try to summarize it by giving the highlights.

As I said, there were five meetings each lasting about two and one-half hours. In addition there were several private talks between single members of our Executive and one or another of the members of the British Cabinet. As Mr. Creech-Jones explained in his opening statement, the discussions were intended to be exploratory. We were to probe each others' minds, and examine together, as he said, the difficulties involved in various suggested solutions, in an effort to discover common ground.

On our part we made an initial statement of our position through our Chairman, Mr. Ben-Gurion, who acted as our principal spokesman. We said it was our purpose to accomplish two things, if possible: (1) to reach an agreement with the British Government which would secure the rights of the Jewish people and meet its most tormenting needs; (2) to re-establish relations of mutual friendship and cooperation between the Jewish people and the British Government. Any solution to be acceptable from our viewpoint, would have to take into account our three cardinal demands and aims: (a) free entry of Jews into Palestine; (b) full opportunity for development; (c) our striving for independence -- the achievement of the status of a free people among the family of nations.

We stated at our first meeting, and repeated it on subsequent occasions, that if Great Britain was prepared now to return to the principle of the Balfour Declaration and carry out the Mandate in accordance with its letter and spirit, we would not press our claim for immediate Statehood; we were prepared to wait. But if Great Britain was unwilling or unable to re-establish a Mandatory regime which would fulfill the purpose of the Mandate, then the only alternative was to permit us, the Jewish people, to carry out the Mandate by the establishment

of a Jewish State. That was the essence of our position.

At the outset, both Mr. Bevin and Mr. Creech-Jones assured us that they came with no definite proposals to place upon the table; they were trying to be open-minded and consider all possibilities on their merits. But it soon became evident that this was a "facon de parler," an expression of diplomatic politeness, rather than a strict statement of fact. If their mind was open, it was by no means vacant. Obviously they had given the matter considerable thought and had certain quite definite ideas, both positive and negative. Negatively they were emphatic in their assertion that there was no going back to the old Mandate. In this connection we heard an eloquent plea that it was impossible to keep Palestine under what was to the population an irksome foreign rule, having no roots in the country and in no wise responsible to its inhabitants; it was impossible to continue to govern without associating the population in the process of government. The Mandate in its original form was no longer practicable. Something new had taken its place.

Nor were we long kept in suspense on the moot subject of partition. At the very first meeting we had a vigorous statement from the Foreign Secretary which amounted to a thorough-going rejection of participation and which listed some of the official arguments against it. We were told that if a viable Jewish State were set up in a part of Palestine, then the rest of the country could not possibly provide a viable Arab State. Moreover the Arabs would fight such a solution. The United Nations would not approve it. Nor was it desirable in the interest of Jews and Arabs alike to divide up so small a country. And while the whole idea was thus summarily dismissed, we were challenged in the same breath to produce a definite scheme of partition and lay it on the table. To what end we were expected to elaborate a project which the British Government had already rejected in principle, was not very clear.

I would like to add at this point, that at a later stage, I think it was in the third meeting, we had a further very definite expression on the subject from Mr. Bevin. A very interesting statement. He himself reverted to the subject of partition and said there were many people in this country who talked about partition, or favored it, but he had personally examined at least four or five plans of partition in Government offices, and he could find not one plan which did not involve- he could find not a single plan which did not involve- the placing of at least 300,000 Arabs under Jewish rule, in a projected Jewish State. In other words, he could not accept in principle the thought that an appreciable section of the Arab population of Palestine should be included in a Jewish State, and placed, as it were, under Jewish domination! You may be sure that we responded to that argument, and we asked Mr. Bevin whether it had crossed his mind that the alternative apparently contemplated by the White Paper and other schemes in the spirit of the White Paper, was the inclusion of 600,000 or 700,000 or 800,000 European Jews under Arab domination, in a preponderantly Arab State, and whether that was an acceptable proposition from the general viewpoint.

Having thus negated and dismissed both the continuance of the Mandate, and the setting up of a Jewish State, even in a part of Palestine, the representatives of His Majesty's Government, gradually revealed the outlines of the project which they had in mind. They did so, cautiously- almost gingerly. At first it was wrapped in vapor- a figure mysteriously veiled. The idea was at first somewhat vaguely referred to as a bi-national state, later, as a Unitary State, but as the veils were lifted one by one, we recognized the familiar but repellent features of our old friend, the Morrison-Grady Plan, somewhat spruced up, but decidedly lacking the fresh bloom of youth. As it finally emerged in written form, we noted some minor changes from the original Morrison project,

but these changes were mostly for the worse.

I am not going to stop here to give a detailed analysis of this plan which is in substance the same as the Morrison Plan of provincial autonomy or cantonization, except to point out just a few major features.

As we stated clearly to the representatives of the British Government: (and our statement produced something of a storm) this plan in its essence was one intended to assure the carrying out of the principles of the White Paper of 1939. The principles were the same. The purpose of the White Paper was first, to restrict and confine Jewish development in Palestine within a very small area, to "ghettoize" us. This was expressed and implemented through the Land Ordinance of 1940. The second objective was to so limit Jewish immigration- oh a trickle of it might be continued- to so limit Jewish immigration as to make sure that we would be frozen in the position of a permanent minority of one-third of the whole population. In that respect it didn't matter if there were occasional waves of Jewish immigration provided they were so carefully calculated that at no time would it lead to our exceeding the limits which had been set, or permit the possibility of our escaping from the status of a minority; and the third principle of the White Paper was the prospect which it held out to the Arabs that sooner or later, and now sooner rather than later, they would have an independent Arab Palestine in which they could dominate the country and the Jews at will.

The new plan made all of those things possible, though not always explicitly. It gave us neither a sovereign state nor an autonomous province, but a ghetto of somewhat less than 2,000 square miles in extent. This plan also explicitly provided for the withdrawal of recognition from the Jewish Agency for Palestine, by providing that the representatives of the Jews on the Government's advisory council, representatives presumably to be appointed by the High Commissioner, would supersede the Jewish Agency as the channel of communication between the Jewish community and the Government of Palestine.

The one bait which the plan held out to us was the admission of 100,000 Jews. But Mr. Morrison, in his statement in the House of Commons on July 31, 1946, held out the prospect that these 100,000, if this plan was adopted, would be admitted within 12 months. According to the new plan, they were to be admitted over a period of two years, or to be more precise, twenty-five months.

These were some of the improvements which the new plan brought, as over against the previous Morrison Plan.

Politely but firmly we stated that we could not regard the second edition of the Morrison Plan as a possible basis for discussion any more than the first edition; indeed it was difficult for us to understand how they came to re-submit the proposal, after it had been rejected in its earlier version not only by the Jews and the Arabs, but by the American Government as well.

It did occur to some of us that a clow might perhaps be provided by the preparations which were evidently in progress for renewed and extensive military repression in Palestine. Ostensibly these had been brought on by the kidnapping of two British civilians in retaliation for the impending execution of Dov Gruner. But then the question was: Why did the death sentence of Dov Gruner have to be announced just at the beginning of our talks in London? Was this only the semi-automatic operation of military and bureaucratic procedures, or was there a design to intimidate the Yishuv and the Jewish Agency, to soften us up, to make us more amenable and receptive to the Government's latest proposals? Whether that was the purpose I do not venture to judge, but if it was, it failed completely.

However, in the midst of our negotiations with the Government we did have to take time out to consider the seven-day ultimatum handed to our colleagues in Jerusalem while we were sitting in Downing Street. Our colleagues consulted us on the answer to the ultimatum, but the consultation was a pure formality, there was not a single member of the Executive, whether in Jerusalem, in London, in New York or in Cleveland, who hesitated an instant. Our answer was unanimous, our answer was No! Having denounced and condemned the shedding of innocent blood as a weapon in our political warfare, and having decided upon such counter-measures as we could take within the framework of the Movement and within the framework of the Yishuv, we were not prepared to call upon the Jews of Palestine to turn spies and informers or to assume police duties for which we lacked the necessary authority to perform.

To return to the Morrison-Bevin plan, again we were at pains to explain to the Ministers of the Crown why we must reject such a solution. We pointed out the monstrous inequity inherent in that approach which called for new sacrifices, for the kind of territorial sacrifices which were inherent in outright partition, without the compensating advantages. Palestine had once been partitioned and mutilated, twenty-five years ago, when Trans-Jordan, embracing three-fourths of the original area was lopped off; we had been persuaded then to accept the amputation on the assurance that we would be guaranteed a free and full opportunity for development at least in the remaining 10,000 square miles of western Palestine. Now we were being asked to renounce more than four-fifths of western Palestine without even the assurance that we would be masters of our own fate in the tiny remainder- five per cent of the original territory. What we were offered was neither an independent state nor an autonomous province, but a ghetto of less than 2,000 square miles, and a constitutional regime which combined continual rule by a British High Commissioner with a prospect of eventual domination of the Jews by the Arab majority in a Unitary Arab State.

As you know, simultaneously with our rejection of these proposals, they were rejected by the Arabs- in fact the time table was such that the Arab rejection came first. It was evident that to them, too, this was a replica of the previous proposal which did not satisfy their ambitions and desires. They would not accept even the number, of 100,000 immigrants over two years, and they would not accept the prospect that in a small part of Palestine the Jews could be free on a cruelly reduced basis to carry on some degree of development.

What then is the net result of the Anglo-Arab Conference and the Anglo-Jewish talks in London? The positive results are nil, as some of us had foreseen and foretold. The British Government was not yet ready to depart from its anti-Zionist orientation and the basic principles of the White Paper. I hope I may be forgiven if in this connection I quote a passage from the speech I made at the Congress in Basle:

"Recognizing that from 1939 to date, and as of the moment the British Government has stood and stands firmly by its basically anti-Zionist policy on orientation, we must regard the London Conference on Palestine in the light of a continuing struggle. Like the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, initiated by the British Government, we must regard this Conference also as a maneuver on the part of the Government designed to promote its own basically anti-Zionist policy, unless and until there is clear proof to the contrary. No such proof has been forthcoming as yet."

On the whole I still stand by that statement.

I cannot truthfully say that I am deeply disappointed by the outcome of the discussions since I expected so little from them, and yet I would like to qualify

the statement I quoted in the light of my experience during these weeks. It is true that in a certain sense there are several Englands which we must take into account. To be sure, virtually all Englishmen of all shades of opinion are basically united in a common will to preserve their heritage and maintain their country's position in the world. Nevertheless the situation is one of considerable complexity. Englishmen are not necessarily of one mind regarding the Palestine issue, or other controversial questions. It is a fact that the Government has been subjected to considerable prodding on the part of the press which demands a constructive solution. It is also true that the solution most often advocated in the press in recent weeks has been partition. Evidently there is considerable sentiment for partition among some members of Parliament and even among some members of the Cabinet where opinions are said to be rather sharply divided on the subject. The existence of this divergence of opinion was clearly reflected in the course of our own discussions with the two Secretaries of State, one of whom was evidently disposed to go a considerable distance-- at least some distance-- in the direction of meeting some of our objections to the cantonization plan and to our far-reaching suggestions for possible modifications, which were however promptly disavowed by his senior colleague.

Taking all of these and other indications into account, it may be true as I have said, that there are many Englands, and that therefore what is British policy today may not be British policy tomorrow, but having said all that, I must add that there is one England which from our point of view is the England which matters at the moment, and the Britain with which we may have to struggle for some time to come. This England to which I refer is the ramified and highly organized system of permanent officials, experts, career diplomats and silent men behind the scenes, who hold firmly in their hands the reins of imperial policy. Much has been said about Mr. Bevin's anti-Zionist and even anti-Jewish proclivities, and yet it is not Mr. Bevin personally with whom we must contend, nor is it an accident that Mr. Bevin and Mr. Alexander, who preside over the Foreign Office and the War Office respectively, are our principal adversaries in the Cabinet. It simply means that those two powerful organizations, the Foreign Office and the War Office which are the main custodians of British Imperial interests still regard a pro-Zionist policy in Palestine as incompatible with the general policy to which they are committed in the Near East. So far as our aims and aspirations are concerned, it is their England, that England, and their policy which constitute for the time being the determining influence and the decisive factor within the British Government.

I would like to add, that powerful as they are, they are not all-powerful; they are not omnipotent. World forces which are increasingly beyond their control are being brought into play. It is my profound conviction that their position, so long and so successfully maintained in relation to the Palestine question has been shaken, and is being steadily undermined, and that the concerted movement of events in many parts of the world is making the position which they have taken, more untenable day by day. Indeed it seemed to me that Mr. Bevin was in a most uncomfortable and possibly even in a tragic position. At our first meeting he repeated his declaration that he had staked his political career upon the constructive solution of the Palestine question. And toward the end when it appeared to him that the plans he had devised or the plans which others had devised for him, were not going to lead to any positive results, he grew gloomier by the day. He declared that he was very sorry that he would have to admit failure, that Great Britain would have to return to the United Nations and admit complete failure. It was clear to us that they were not very eager at the time to refer the whole question to the United Nations, and the reasons were obvious. The position in the United Nations, difficult, and uncertain as it is from our standpoint, contains elements of great uncertainty and potential danger also from the British point of view. Britain was no longer on the bridge, at the helm directing the ship of state of the community of nations; other, fresher, stronger,

more powerful forces have appeared upon the world scene.

One could not escape the impression in London, that this was a great powerful nation, with a mighty tradition, struggling very hard to maintain its position against terrific odds. The entire change which has come about in the relation of forces in the world was symbolized to us by the sudden outbreak of the fuel crisis. Imagine the great City of London, imagine those vast centers of industry throughout England, suddenly stricken; London plunged into darkness, I must say "darkness at noon" because it is dark in London even at noon during the winter, and without electric lights you are in a very bad way, with the lifts not working, with people in large offices working by candle-light with great factories at a standstill, and millions of people thrown out of work, with all that this implied for the State and the British economy, Britain is in a very difficult position and generally in a very difficult position in relation to Palestine. Repeatedly they told us that it was humiliating to them that they had to maintain 100,000 men in that tiny country to maintain order- 100,000 men! Churchill in the House of Commons had roared about the enormous cost of this garrison, and about the great drain on the manpower of Great Britain, and mothers and sisters and fathers and brothers back home were writing letters to Members of Parliament: they want their boys back home! What are they doing out there? In these fights, in this struggle between Jews and Arabs? Why don't they come home?

There were converging pressures upon the British Government: the pressure of these boats on the high seas. Again, and again, and again they referred to that. And with special bitterness to the role of America in that connection: how is it possible, they said, that the citizens of a friendly nation like the United States should provide money and possibilities to carry on this illegal immigration? And again: it was humiliating for them that they had to mobilize the Navy to intercept these boats. Can't something be done about it?

There were these pressures. And then there was that great pressure of American public opinion, the attitude of the American nation. There is terrific resentment of America and of what is described as "American interference" in British official circles. Every time I opened my mouth, and I was the only American there, Mr. Bevin thought it was a good occasion to deliver a diatribe against what he called "American interference." He thought there would have been more Jews in Palestine by this time if America had said and done nothing; he complained that every time one wants to do something for the Jews, somebody else comes along and upsets the applecart. But all of this bitterness and resentment reflects the growing recognition of the rising influence and the rising power of the United States in world affairs, and the unpalatable fact that Great Britain is not free to settle the issue of Palestine without taking world opinion and specifically the opinion of the United States into full account.

Now we are told the matter is to be referred to the United Nations. Dr. Silver has rightly said that this announcement requires much clarification. We don't know just what it means. Does it mean that Great Britain is now prepared to give up the Mandate definitely? To relinquish its control over Palestine? To withdraw its forces and to give up considerable political economic and strategic advantages? Or does it mean that Great Britain wants to place upon others the onus of rendering a verdict? Of making a decision with regard to future policy, a decision which it will then be prepared to carry out as a new trustee under the terms of new trusteeship agreements granted by the United Nations?

That remains to be seen. Parliamentary discussions to take place this week may shed considerable light on their intentions. But I do feel that what happened in London was a very severe defeat for Mr. Bevin and the Foreign

Office. I have asked myself precisely what he had in mind? What did he hope to accomplish by this conference and these talks? In retrospect it seems to me that what he thought he could accomplish was this: He thought that he could persuade the Arabs in the first instance to accept a plan which while it gave certain concessions to the Jews, did on the whole give the Arabs an overwhelming political victory, and he thought that once having gotten their agreement or acquiescence, he could turn to the Jews and exert pressure upon them, dangling before them with the one hand the prospect of admission of 100,000 Jewish refugees, and brandishing over our heads with the other hand the threat of further military repressions in Palestine.

If such was his plan and these his designs they failed completely and he personally suffered a very severe defeat, as he admitted.

And now the British Government again stands without a plan. They declared that they were not prepared to impose even this solution upon the Jews and the Arabs; they could not impose any solution. Thus there is left not a policy, but what Mr. Churchill described as a "gaping void". It is perfectly clear in the development of these events that Britain has for the time being given up the attempt to settle this issue by its own unaided efforts. It intends, it hopes, to draw into the process of effecting such a solution, other nations and more definitely the United States of America. To us Mr. Bevin said that the setting up of a Jewish State in a part of Palestine would never receive the approval of the United Nations. At the same time, as we heard the rumors, he told the Arabs: Beware of the United Nations. There sit the United States and other western countries who are committed to Jewish immigration into Palestine and recognition of Jewish rights. He pleaded with them to come to terms with him. They were adamant. Perhaps Mr. Bevin didn't understand that what he was actually doing was to negotiate with the ex-Mufti through his proxies. He was negotiating with the most implacable, the most insatiable of the Nazi-minded men still left on this earth. The delegations of the Arabs in Palestine sitting in London were the ex-Mufti's proxies, following his line, and obedient to his instructions. Their attitude was summarized by that one phrase, "not a single additional Jew." I don't think even Mr. Bevin had fully realized the position, or had expected it. I believe that he now realizes that along the lines which he had hoped for, no solution is possible. Already he told the Arabs, and this statement has been made public, whereas the Parliament in 1939 had approved the White Paper, the British Labor Party had not; and, he added, the British Labor Party felt they were fully justified in reviewing that policy, and that in any event the British Government was not prepared to continue indefinitely to endorse the White Paper by force of arms.

For years and years they had told us that they were not prepared to enforce the provisions of the Mandate by British bayonets; the time has now come when they have told the Arabs that they are not prepared to enforce the provisions of the White Paper by force of arms.

The question is thus wide open. The situation therefore calls today for original thinking on the part of the American Government and people. The London Times has pointed out that whereas Great Britain is bound by the Balfour Declaration, other nations are not. The Times is very much in error. The Balfour Declaration was an Anglo-American conception; it was approved in advance by the Government of the United States, and it was approved subsequently by the unanimous resolution of Congress in 1922. Palestine was a ward of this country as well as a ward of Great Britain. We have acquired certain rights. What with the commanding position which America has now acquired in world affairs, it

devolves upon the United States today to take the lead in the councils of the United Nations, to find and carry out a just and constructive solution of this great world problem. From this forum, we the Zionists of America today should direct our appeal to President Truman and to his Secretary of State, General Marshall and to their advisors and to the Congressional leaders in both Houses and of both Parties: THE Issue has come upon our own doorstep. There is no country in a better position to take the lead in the United Nations on this question than is our own, and this is today the great historic responsibility of the Jews of this country. Beyond that we must continue our efforts and our struggle in all directions. The stream of ships from southern Europe to the shores of Palestine must not be interrupted hereafter. And that too is largely an American responsibility, as you will come to realize, the responsibility of American Zionists in large measure.

And finally, we should demand of our Government today, that pending whatever action may be taken in the United Nations -- and such action is bound to take time our Government must insist that the iniquitous provisions of the White Paper be abolished at once; the racial discrimination with regard to land, of which the leaders of the Labor Party, I assure you, are today heartily ashamed, that must go, and the restoration of Jewish immigration into Palestine, at least those 100,000 which the Anglo-American Committee had recommended, they must come in as an immediate interim measure of alleviation pending the final solution.

I repeat, my friends, I have come back not disappointed, not disheartened, but strongly, deeply strengthened in my conviction that if we pursue our course undaunted, hewing firmly to our line, "sof hakovod" lavo..... " With respect to this tiny corner of the world, we, the smallest, the weakest of nations, are the stronger party; to us it is a matter of life and death, therefore we must prevail.

* * *

E. Newman
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To the Editor of the New York Times:

Mr. Lessing Rosenwald's letter to the Times of March 17th is a further step in his anti-Zionist campaign and a renewed attempt to spread a monstrous slander against the Jewish Agency for Palestine. The essence of the case Mr. Rosenwald tries to make out is that Zionist demands for a Jewish State in Palestine represent a lust for "domination" to which the Zionists have been willing to sacrifice the lives of European Jews who might otherwise have gained admission into Palestine. The very opposite is the truth. For decades the Zionist Movement subordinated consideration of the ultimate political destiny of Palestine to practical constructive effort and concentrated all its energies and resources upon the great tasks of immigration, colonization and development -- with notable success. Whether this policy of subordinating the "political" to the "practical" effort was sound or not may be open to argument. What is not open to argument is the incontestable fact that this was the policy consistently pursued by Zionism, as long as Britain did not wholly repudiate its plain obligation under the Mandate to "facilitate Jewish immigration."

Essentially this has remained basic Zionist policy to the present moment. What Zionism seeks to achieve today as always, is large-scale, continuing immigration of Jews into Palestine and their settlement in town and country. All of Zionism's recent political efforts and the formulation of political objectives aim to provide the most effective legal-political guarantees to that end. If the political objective has been formulated anew in terms of a Jewish State, it was to meet a new political situation: Britain's complete repudiation of the Mandate, creating a political vacuum.

In 1939 the British Government issued the universally condemned White Paper, designed to reduce Jewish immigration to a trickle, to confine Jewish development and colonization to a small part of the country and to freeze the Jewish population into the position of a permanent minority in what was to become an Arab State. For three years thereafter the Zionist Movement exhausted every possible means of inducing the British Government to abandon the illegal White Paper policy, so that Jews trapped in Nazi Europe might flee to Palestine and be saved. I do not recall that Mr. Rosenwald was conspicuously active in that campaign, conducted by Jews and Christians alike, to relax the rigors of the White Paper in the interest of Jewish refugees.

It was only in 1942 after all these efforts proved fruitless and in the face of the mass slaughter of European Jews by the Nazis that the Zionist Movement put forward its demand for a Jewish Commonwealth with full equality of right and status for all inhabitants of the land. Only thereafter (I believe in 1943) did Mr. Rosenwald and his associates become active politically. What drove him into action was evidently not the plight of the Jewish refugees but the growing public support for a Jewish Commonwealth, which threatened his peace of mind. For several years the argument was advanced that the problem of Jewish immigration into Palestine could be solved only by a "humanitarian approach" to the question, while the Zionists were retarding Jewish immigration by raising political issues and discussing political ultimates. That argument has since been settled rather conclusively and on the highest level. In August 1945, President Truman appealed to the British Government to admit to Palestine, 100,000 Jewish refugees. He did so then, and again subsequently, on purely humanitarian grounds without raising any political issue and studiously avoiding any mention of the Balfour Declaration, the Mandate, the Jewish National Home or a Jewish State. The Zionist

Movement, far from quarrelling over this humanitarian approach, applauded the President's initiative and mobilized public support to back him. But the British Government remained deaf to the President's humanitarian plea and insisted in the most categorical terms that the matter must be treated as part of the political problem of Palestine and considered only in connection with a permanent settlement of the political and constitutional issues. The vaunted "humanitarian approach" had been tried out under the best and highest auspices and met with complete failure.

Mr. Rosenwald claims that "on at least two occasions" Zionists were given the "opportunity" to agree to the admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine but turned down this generous offer because of "political" considerations. His reference is first to the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry and secondly to the latest proposals of the British Government.

To begin with, Mr. Rosenwald contends that the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry made provision for "the early (not immediate) admission of 100,000 Jews to Palestine." He is in error. The text of the Committee's report on this point reads as follows: "We recommend (a) that 100,000 certificates be authorized immediately for the admission into Palestine of Jews who have been the victims of Nazi and Fascist persecution."

Mr. Rosenwald then says that a "clamor" was set up for the acceptance of that recommendation "alone." He contrives the innuendo that this "clamor" was solely on the part of Zionists as a result of whose insistence "the entire enterprise was scuttled." The truth is, as Mr. Rosenwald ought to know, that the Committee's report was made public by President Truman, together with a statement of his own, in which he endorsed several short-term recommendations including: a) the immediate admission of 100,000 Jews; b) the revocation of existing restrictions on the acquisition of land; c) the promotion of large-scale development projects; and d) the improvement of the cultural and economic conditions of the Arab population. The President added: "In addition to these immediate objectives, the report deals with many other questions of long-range political policies and questions of international law which require careful study and which I will take under advisement."

The President's statement was published throughout the world simultaneously with the Committee's Report and before either the Zionists or the Arabs had an opportunity to give the report any study. Was the President's statement, then, "the clamor" which "scuttled the entire enterprise?"

The official reaction of the Zionist Movement at the time was to endorse the President's statement and to support his renewed plea for the early admission of the 100,000. But Prime Minister Attlee promptly repudiated President Truman's position and attached impossible conditions to the carrying out of the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee. To blame Zionists for the "scuttling" of the recommendations is ludicrous, especially in view of the public statements made during the year by prominent American members of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry, who placed the responsibility squarely where it belonged -- at the doorstep of 10 Downing Street. Mr. Rosenwald also chooses to forget that the Arabs were most vociferous in their hostility to the report. Indeed it is a striking feature of Mr. Rosenwald's letter that he studiously ignores Arab intransigence as a factor in the "scuttling" or rejection of various proposals. This omission is particularly significant in relation to the recent negotiations in London.

It happens that I was one of those who participated in the London talks with the British Government on behalf of the Jewish Agency for Palestine and I regret to state that Mr. Rosenwald's account of what transpired there is grossly

inaccurate and misleading. He says that Zionist negotiators "spurned" the admission into Palestine of 4,000 Jews per month for a period of two years and a continuance of admission subsequently depending on economic absorptive capacity. In the first place Mr. Rosenwald forgets to mention that the proposed immigration was made conditional on the acceptance of a worsened edition of the Morrison plan which had been previously rejected by Jews and Arabs alike, as well as by the Government of the United States. It was a new embodiment of the principles of the White Paper. But even the adoption of this plan, thoroughly bad as it was, did not depend upon our acceptance or rejection. Mr. Bevin made it clear that it had to be accepted by the Arabs as well as the Jews, or else dropped. When the plan was outlined to us, I personally put the question whether there was any prospect of its acceptance by the Arabs, to which there was no reply. Actually the "opportunity" to accept or reject the British proposals never existed for us, in view of the veto granted to the Arab negotiators under Mr. Bevin's procedure. It is obvious to any intelligent observer that no tolerable solution of any kind is possible, if its formulation and adoption are made contingent on the consent and approval of the Mufti and his followers.

Mr. Rosenwald further misrepresents the position we took in the London talks by making the assertion that we would not accept the British proposals because there was not at the same time "acceptance of their plan for a Jewish State." In our conversations with Mr. Bevin and Mr. Creech-Jones, we stated repeatedly, orally as well as in writing, that we would not press our claims or demands for Jewish statehood, if the British Government was prepared to return to the Mandate and carry out its provisions in faithful conformity with its letter and spirit. We continued to make this clear even after conferences were over and a written statement to that effect is on file with the British Government.

Mr. Rosenwald has much to say about terror and terrorists in Palestine and seems to lump them with the official spokesmen of the Zionist Movement, though he ought to know better. We have condemned terror, times without number; but in view of some of Mr. Rosenwald's assertions, it is worth noting that the Resistance Movement, on more than one occasion, informed the British Government that it would discontinue active resistance if substantial Jewish immigration were resumed.

Finally I would point out that while Mr. Rosenwald is horrified by the idea of a predominantly Jewish State, "dominated" by a Jewish majority, he is not at all fazed by the prospect of placing approximately 600,000 Jews of European background under Arab domination in a predominantly Arab State. The likely fate of a Jewish minority under an Arab majority does not concern him, so long as he is freed of his fear of the rise of a Jewish Nation, which seems to be his obsession.

Most sincerely yours,

EN:BW

Emanuel Neumann