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Communist purges, 1953.

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## COMMUNIST PURGES AND THEIR JEWISH IMPLICATIONS February 15, 1953

Some ten days ago I had the occasion to discuss the very subject which I am to discuss this morning on the occasion of a testimonial evening, which was held in the City of New York, and at that time I expressed the following ideas on the subject, which I want to use as the text of what I am going to say this morning.

> The Soviet Union has turned violently anti-Israel and anti-Zionist. From Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, Bucharest and Kaunas, a chorus of charges and anathemas has been sounding off against the Zionist Movement and the government of Israel, identical with the unbridled denunciations which have been visited upon American imperialism, Titoism, Trotskyism and all forms of deviationism.

> In a sense, a developing negative attitude on the part of the Soviets toward the State of Israel was inevitable. As the State of Israel found itself drawn more and more in its sympathies towards the free democracies of the West, which was the logical consequence of the inherent democracy and love of freedom of its people, whose tradition is, after all, not the Muscovite-Romanov tradition of absolutism, but the Sinaitic tradition which proclaimed "liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," and, as the State of Israel acted in cooperation with other free nations in the United Nations on all matters which involved basic principles of the Charter, the Soviet attitude was bound to become increasingly more critical and resentful. And I assume that the Movement as well as well as the State of Israel were prepared for such an eventuality. But what was unthinkable and unpredictable - and monstrous - have been the gross and unauthenticated imputations of espionage, conspiracy, subversion and medical murder against an historic movement of national liberation and humanity which, unlike Communism, has never worked in conspiratorial darkness, and which has never been the enemy of any people or any government which has been friendly to it. It is inconceivable that the Soviet Union would have instructed its representatives at the United Nations less than five years ago to champion the cause of a sovereign Jewish State and to vote for its admission to the United Nations if the Zionist Movement were of the character which it is now represented to be - that is, up to 1947, a paid agent of the British Intelligence, and since then, of the United States Intelligence.

There is no point in speculating here about the complex of motives which are responsible for this amazing about-face - even allowing for the traditional unfriendliness of Communism towards Zionism which antidated the reversal of its position in 1947. The kettle of a Communist mass trial usually boils more than one fish, but what a fantastic stew of juridical regamarole is this, by which life-long professional anti-Zionists are hanged because they are Zionists, and Zionists are charged with fostering anti-Semitism, and the American Joint Distribution Committee is charged with being an international Jewish bourgeois nationalist organization, set up by the American Intelligence Service to exterminate the topranking officials of the U.S.S.R.! Perhaps their attitude will change again when the present political or party exigencies will have been served, or when the unsavory grotesqueness of this whole canard will have set their own teeth on edge.

But at the moment, the Zionist Movement and the State of Israel are confronted with the fact that a very powerful bloc of states has allied itself with the Arab bloc in open opposition. This is a very serious matter to contemplate, especially in relation to the total stoppage of Jewish emigration from those countries to Israel in the foreseeable future.

There may be even more serious overtones to this anti-Zionist, anti-Israel campaign launched by the Communist states. It may carry over into an all-out campaign against the Jews of those countries who number some two-and-a-half million souls. I should prefer not to be forced to conclude that the Soviet Union has definitely gone anti-Semitic, or that it has adopted anti-Semitism as an instrument of Communist policy. Some of my friends whose judgment I value greatly are convinced that this is actually the case. If so, then another appalling tragedy of fearful and staggering proportions is in store for our people. I would prefer to be more deliberate in judgment. I am frank to acknowledge that it is difficult to understand what is going on there, as do many other men of good will everywhere who, though they are not Communists or fellow-travelers, have consistently favored a rapprochement between the East and the West and a working out of a modus vivendi so that all the peoples of the world might have peace and a chance to live their lives in accordance with their own economic and political preferences. They have favored such a rapprochement because they were persuaded that Communism, unlike Fascism or Nazism, was committed to basic human equality and was opposed to racialism and to the exploitation or extermination of groupsor nationalities regarded as inferior or undesirable. There was the record of the official outlawry of antieSemitism in the Soviet Union and its opposition to all forms of discrimination on the basis of race or nationality.

On the other hand, the anti-Jewish nuances of the Prague trial and the violent references to the menace of Jewish nationalism in the Soviet press are unmistakable. Certainly, this loud concert of official denunciation of Jewish nationalism, and the widely disseminated charges of a Jewish network of spies and saboteurs, plotting to destroy the Soviet Union cannot help but incite and inflame the peoples of the Soviet Union and endanger not alone the peace and security, but even the very lives of the Jewish people living there.

It is not too late for some authoritative statement or act on the part of the highest Soviet leadership to clarify the situation, set the record straight, relieve the minds of men of fear and suspicion, and avert an appalling catastrophe. Representative Jewish bodies should not overlook the diplomatic approach along with the public protest. Recent events in which the Soviet Union itself played a not inconsiderable role should have convinced them that all attempts on the part of parties or governments to gain power, hold power or expand power by capitalizing on anti-Jewish prejudices are doomed ultimately to disastrous failure.

The Seviet Union, as a matter of expediency, once made a pact with Hitler. That blunder had to be atoned for by ten million Russian lives. If now again, as a matter of expediency, it is making a spiritual pact with Hitlerism, in the hope of wooing neo-Nazis or neo-Fascists or Arab irreconcilables, or for whatever other reasons, it will be committing a seonc and a much more fatal blunder. It will be destroying the very basis of its life.

Since I spoke these words on February 5th, the Soviet has ruptured all diplomatic relations with Israel, closed its legation in Tel-Aviv, and served notice on the Israeli legation in Moscow to leave forthwith. The Soviet Union seized upon the incidant of the explosion of a bomb in the Soviet legation in Tel-Aviv as the excuse for summarily breaking off diplomatic relations with Israel. Some hot-headed fanatic perpetrated this shameful and idiotic outrage, and the government of Israel was quick to express its horror, to apologize for an act for which, of course, it was in no way responsible, and to offer amends. Under normal conditions, such explanations and apologies would have been sufficient. The unfortunate incident would have been closed because such incidents in other countries under normal conditions do not necessarily lead to the severance of diplomatic relations between nations.

But Soviet Russia, however, decided otherwise. Seemingly, it welcomed the opportunity to cap the climax of its sustained campaign against the State of Israel by a total break. Evidently, the Soviet eagerly wished for this total break and for a complete change in the friendly line towards Israel which it adopted some five years ago. The Soviet is now determined in a new line in its foreign policy with reference to the State of Israel. This new line has been developing for some time. It was finally fixed and dramatically announced during the purge trials in Prague last November. The word that a new policy was on the way may have been passed out to the Communist leadership at the time of the Communist Party Congress last October. You may recall that the terrible purges in Russia in 1935 - 1935 were also preceded by a Communist Party Congress in 1934. Subsequently, the assassination of a top-flight Communist, Kirov, was used to spark that horrible series of purges in 1935 and 1937, justas today the murder of Zhadov in 1918 is now charged to a group of physicians who were supposed to treat him but who slowly put him to death. This murder is being used to justify another purge, whose extent no one can foretell.

At Prague Rudolf Slansky and a group of other Communist leaders were sentenced to death on numerous counts involving treason, foremost among them that they collaborated with Zionists, that they assisted Czech Jews to leave for Israel and assisted some of them to take their belongings with them and that they cooperated in a large-seale system of espionage which was organized by Zionists who were the agents of the United States Intelligence.

Zionism has now begome officially branded by the Soviet bloc as the enemy of the Soviet, and like all of its enemies, its followers and adherents, those with any connection at all with the movement, must be exterminated. The well-knwon vocabulary of vituperation which Communist propaganda has developed and perfected through the years, the terms, "criminal", "mad dog", "murderers", "saboteurs", etc., is being flung at Zionists in the Soviet press with complete abandon. Five years ago the same Soviet government led in the United Nations for the establishment of the independent State of Israel.

Various explanations have been put forward for this "votto face. In the first place, it should be remembered, friends, that "right about face reversals" are quite frequent with dictatorships. Let me quote one or two examples. In 1933 Hitler rode into power in Germany on a National Socialist platform. Socialism was a vital part of that platform. It was that which attracted masses of working men to the Nazi banner. They were tantalized by the party promises of vast socialistic projects which was to go on indefinitely, into a permanent revolution as it was then called, and on the strength

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of that propaganda, among the workingmen of Germany; the Nazis came into power.

But a few months later in June 1934, those in the Nazi Party who demanded that now that the party had come into power, it should carry out the socialistic part of its program, were brutally and remorselessly massacred and purged - by Hitler's own orders! It no longer suited his purposes. The most zealous of the Nazis were nowportrayed in the public press of the Nazis as criminal conspirators, plotting against the State!

Again, for twenty years the Nazis had made anti-Communism one of the two or three central theses of their propaganda, next to anti-Semitism, the mostimportant part of their program. The Nazis were there to defend the world against the Red Menace. Stalin was represented as the very devil incarnate, and this won for them the support of many industrialists in Germany, members of the professional and middle classes, as well as the support of many people outside Germany. The Nazis were the spear-point in the world's attack on Communism.

But in 1939 Hitler signed the pact with Stalin, a pact of amity and friendship. Hitler was about to attack Poland. He wanted to isolate Poland and to keep Russia neutral, and so principles and precedents and pledges were quickly discarded, thrown overboard. Principles and precednets and pledges count for nothing with dictators. They are not worried about being charged with inconsistency. Propagandists have always held the masses whom they propagandize in contempt. They can always put things over on them inasmuch as they have silenced all vocal **pars** opposition and control all channels of information.

Stalin did the same thing! Anti-Nazism and anti-Fascism were at the very heart of Communist ideology and propaganda for years. The Nazis, they said, were mad dogs. Communism is out to save the world from these mad capitalist and racialist dogs. But in 1939 it served Stalin's purpose to sign a pact of friendship with Hitler, and in so doing, of course, he signed the death-warrant of Poland, bug that didn't bother him. In so doing, he made a laughing stock of all the Communists the world over who up to that moment were told to denounce the Nazis as criminals and enemies of humanity.

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Did the Communists of the world really care? Not at all! They again took their cue from Moscow. The 2nd World War, which soon began, following this Hitler-Stalin pact, was not a war against Nazism and Fascism. It was an imperialist war, and rightthinking people should have nothing to do with it. It was only after Hitler broke the pact and invaded Russia, less than two years later in 1941, that the war suddenly ceased being an imperialist war and became a peoples war, and the Nazis were again mad dogs, criminals and enemies of humanity.

So that the sudden change in Russia's attitude towards Zionism and Israel ought not to startle or surprise people too much. Such changes are frequent with dictatorships, and are motivated by the considerations of the moment. Communists, of course, had always been opposed to Zionism. They looked upon the Zionist movement as a movement of bourgeois elements in league with Great Britain. When the issue of Palestine was finally thrown into the United Nations in 1947, the Soviet government saw an opportunity here of getting the British out of Palestine and it served their purpose at the moment to help in getting them out of Palestine by endorsing the recommendations brought in by the Commission of the United Nations to set up two separate independent states in Palestine, one Jewish and the other Arab. This assistance which came unexpectedly from the Soviets, was, of course, welcome. We thought at the time that perhaps it represented a real change of heart, because after all, the Zionists have never been the agents of British imperialism, and the whole story of the desperate struggle of the Jews to get Great Britain out of Palestine and to establish their own country, and the whole desperate struggle of the closing years prior to the establishment of the State, was proof conclusive that the Zionists were the agents of nobody. It was a movement of self-liberation.

But as the Soviet witnessed the State of Israel, after it was established, moving more and more into the Western sphere, and as the division between the East and the West sharpened, and as the lines were being more sharply drawn, and as the Israeli because of

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their basic democratic traditions and their close contact with the great Jewish community of the United States, which had become the leader in the world against Communist aggression - the Sovi et Union witnessing this, became increasingly more bitter and resentful. It viewed the close friendship between the United States and Israel as distinctly prejudicial to its own interests. It also viewed the restitution agreement Bonn which was reached last year between the State of Israel and the whole government of Western Germany, by which the Bonn government would undertake to make restitution to the State of Israel in part for the expropriation by the Nazis of all the Jewish wealth which belonged to the Jews of Germany, an agreement whereby over a period of some years some \$700,000,000 was to be paid to the government of Israel. The Soviets viewed this restitution with Western Germany, which had become in the meantime the diplomatic battleground of the East and the West, with distinct distaste, for Western Germany had been swung into the orbit of the Western peoples, and the West was arming Western Germany, ostensibly, the Russians maintained, against themselves. The Russians hated this Bonn government. And now that Israel had signed an agreement with that government, which would bring them into close commercial and economic relationships, Israel, in the eyes of the Soviet government, became still further involved in this world-wide partnership which was being built up against the Soviet Union. And it concluded that it was time for a break with Israel. By so doing, it thought perhaps that it would score a point also with the Arabs in the Middle East who are still in unreconciled opposition to Israel.

The Middle East is the strategic part of the world, wast and important, which by and large has so far been closed to Communist penetration. And here is an opportunity win of to penetrate and **bring** good will among the Arabs because/the Soviet opposition to Israel. And there are Arab who, as you know, are not averse to exploit their bargaining position in this mounting tension between the East and the West. Reduced to its baldest terms, it amounts to this: either you Western powers throw Israel to the dogs, or we go Communist. That free men have an inherent stake in freedom, which brooks no alternative,

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under any provocation, does not seem to occur to these Arab spokesmen, or to those of the Western world who seemingly are being influenced by that line of reasoning. In two world wars the Allied Nations sought to rely upon the Arabs in the Middle East, and found them broken reeds to lean on. And they are now being wooed to purchase again these broken reeds under threat that if they do not get what they want, they will swing over into the Communist sphere of influence.

Recently, I read this interesting comment on this particular thought of the Arabs, written by an important writer in the New York Times:

> Instead of assuring the Arabs, however, this gesture on the part of Russia should frighten them to death. It should set them thinking of what would happen to them if Russia should move into the power vacuum. Weak and defenseless as they are, from Syria and Lebanon to Iran and Afghanistan, the one trait they have in common is a passionate nationalism. All are newly and precariously independent and their dominant aim is to maintain their independence. They are constantly seeking stability under strong men and constantly putting them out lest they lose what little independence they have. Even the most primitive and remote Arab peasants have learned in recent years what Soviet friendship means. They see the fate of the independent nations of Europe that have come under Russian protection. If their leaders, therefore, have any foresight, their reaction to the Russian rupture with Israel will be just the opposite of the response the Kremlin hopes for. The new Soviet benevolence to the Arab cause is only a threat, and if national policies were governed by wisdom, as they seldom are, the best answer to this threat would be an effort to end the state of war with Israel and take steps to join the Middle Eastern defense plan now hanging in abeyance because of internal dissensions, the quarrel with Israel and Arab distrust of the West. This applies to Israel, too, now finally ejected from an impossible position of neutrality between the East and the West.

> Whatever the latest Russian move implies, it bodes no good for the Middle East, Arabs or Israelis, and the sooner the peoples of the area draw the obvious conclusions from the shift of Soviet policyly the safer they will be.

This new shift of policy, too, may be part of an intensified anti-foreign, anti-Western, anti-cosmopolitan campaign that has been going on in the Soviet Union for some time. In other words, a determined effort to isolate into quarantine the Soviet people still further from all possible contact with the Western world, to stamp out the last

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vestiges of Europeanism among its people, especially among the sattelite peoples who have not had Communism for long, as have the peoples of Russia proper, whose Communist domination is of recent origin, who have hot been sufficiently indoctrinated or sufficiently reconciled to Communist dictatorial administration, and who have suffered seriously materially with the coming of Communism. There is always the danger there that there would crop up suddenly an intense nationalist movement which would seek to throw off the shackesl of Moscow, even on the part of those who are Communists, just as Tito did in Yugoslavia. And it is this fear of an upsurging nationalism that has driven the Soviet Union to intensify its campaign against any form of contact between any of its peoples in the Western world.

Jewish nationalism, like any other nationalism within the Soviet Union, is therefore, under its anathema. The contact of the two million and a half Jews behind the Iron Curtain, the historic associations, the kinship which they feel with the rest of Jewry, most of whom are in the free countries of the world, most of whom are in the United States - that must be broken. That sense of kinship has not been destroyed in Russia itself in 30 years of Communist effort to isolate the Jews of Russia with the rest of the Jews of the world. And of course, the way to destroy this identification, completely obliterate it, is the way of terror, which is the customary way in countries of dictatorship.

It has also been suggested that Russia is now using the Jews as a scapegoat for failures in one or another of its countries, just as the Nazis had done. It was the classic Nazi technique. Now, the Soviet government has, of course, in the past frequently purged high-ranking members of the party when it felt itself under the necessity of unloading upon someone or some ones, responsibility for failure for one or another acts, or policy or program. For the party as such can never be held responsible for failures, nor can the inherent shortcomings of the Communist program be held responsible for anything of any magnitude. Such failure must be saddled upon individuals,

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and the individuals, therefore, must be liquidated; whenever there is a change of policy, the proponents of the older policy must be discarded - that is, liquidated. Largescale failures are always paid for in the Soviet Union by death.

As so, it has been maintained that the Jewish people as such a re now to be used as the scapegoat for whatever failures of an economic or social character would occur within the Soviet Union. As I indicated earlier, I should not wish to be forced to the conclusion that this is actually the case. I should not wish to be forced to the conclusion that this motive was behind the Prague trials or is behind the indictment of these Jewish doctors in Mascow. The evidence is, as yet, not conclusive, nor is the evidence that the Communists plan to use anti-Semitism as a means of attracting the nec-Nazis in Germany and win them over to a pro-Soviet orientation conclusive.

On this score I believe the Soviets should be given, for the time beginning, the benefit of the doubt. Its 30-year record of formal opposition to anti-Semitism entitles it to receive the benefit of the douby. The pattern is far from being clear. The other day I read in the press, as you have read, that noted Jewish author, Ilya Ehrenburg, had received the Stalin peace prize. The day before yesterday we read where another noted Jewish Communist leader who died in Moscow is to receive a state funeral in the Red Square and all honors reserved for the highest dignitaries.

I don't know what it all means, but surely, there is no purpose to be served by jumping at conclusions with such vast and terrible implications until more evidence is at hand. Surely, it is up to the responsible leaders of the Soviet government to speak up in clear and unmistakable terms, to speak at once, before the danger assumes real serious proportions, to clarify the situation. Danger lurks in this ambiguity - danger to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million human beings.

As far as we are concerned, the Jewish people, the State of Israel, I would suggest that we carry on without any panic. The best way to meet the situation is to strengthen the new State of Israel; as we strengthen it economically, it becomes also militarily strengthened in relation to its hostile neighbors and its diplomatic position

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becomes fortified.

All that has happened - the intensified opposition on the part of the Arab block, the smooth, violent opposition of the powerful Soviet bloc - all of that clearly points to the fact that the Jews of the world must remain alerted, mobilized, must be prepared to do all that the situation requires to make strong what they have builded, and defend what they have called into existence, and I am sure that with unity and faith and courage and sacrifice, we will outride this storm, too, which may be of shorter duration than people imagine.

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now been mobilized into an association called the American Friends of the Middle East. With few exceptions, they are the American enemies of the State of Israel. The leading spirit of that group is a lady who formerly did a very profitable business as a lecturer on Zionist platforms and who, in her unregenerate days, and before she went nativist, declared: "The Jews were prepared to fight for the Allies, and did fight for them. The Arabs were not - they bargained with threats. It is never good to give into blackmail, for there is never an end of that sort of thing. And again she declared: "Palestine is a very small part of the whole Middle Eastern complex and Arab world. Its loss for the Arabs would be negligible if they could really exchange it for their cwn security and epportunity for national development."

This security and opportunity are now theirs. Why has not one single Arab statesman of courage and stature arisen among them to set the problem of the Middle East for them in its true perspective, to raise the sights of his people away from that little corner of Israel on which they concentrate with such rancer and dudgeon as if bewitched, to the vast undeveloped territories everywhere about them, to their resources and potentialities which, if wisely exploited in cooperation with the people of Israel whose destiny is forever linked with the peace and prosperity of that region, could rescue their miserable masses from backwardness, poverty and disease and raise the level of life, health and education of all the peoples living there today, and countless millions more.

The Arab opposition has gathered strength; and now from the East comes another vehement wind of opposition. The Soviet Union has turned violently anti-Israel and anti-Zionist. From Moscow, Warsaw, Prague, Bucharest and Kaunas, a chorus of charges and anathemas has been sounding off against our Movement and the government of Israel, identical with the unbridled denunciations which have been visited upon American imperialism, Titoism, Trotskyism and all forms of deviationism.

In a sense, a developing negative attitude on the part of the Soviets toward the State of Israel was inevitable. As the State of Israel found itself drawn more and more in its sympathies towards the free democracies of the West, which was the logical consequence of the inherent democracy and love of freedom of its people, whose tradition is, after all, not the Muscovite-Romano freedom of absolutism, but the Sinaitic tradition which proclaimed "liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof," and, as the State of Israel, acted in cooperation with other free nations in the United Nations on all matters which involved - 4 -

basic principles of the Charter, the Soviet attitude was bound to become increasingly more critical and resentful. And I assume that the Movement as well as the State of Israel were prepared for such an eventuality. But what was unthinkable and unpredictable - and monstrous - have been the gross and unauthenticated imputations of espionage, conspiracy, subversion and modical murder against an historic movement of national liberation and humanity which, unlike Communism, has never worked in conspiratorial darkness, and which has never been the enemy of any people or government which has been friendly to it. It is inconceivable that the Soviet Union would have instructed its representatives at the United Nations less that five years ago to champion the cause of a sovereign Jewish State and to vote for its admission to the United Nations if the Zionist Movement were of the character which it is now represented to be - up to 1947, a paid agent of the British Intelligence, and since then, of the United States Intelligence.

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## SILVER ADDRESS

Be that as it may, we are clearly facing a sharp increase and a strong consolidation of resistance to our Movement and to the State of Israel - a hostile Arabism, a hostile Sovietism and a hostile neo-Nazism, now again raising its ugly head in Western Europe. The storm clouds are gathering.

Are we prepared for eventualities, for the strains and tensions of tomorrow? I mean spiritually prepared - sufficiently alerted, sufficiently mobilized, sufficiently determined?

Our key positions remain, as heretofore, the State of Israel and American Jewry. Israel needs urgent economic undergirding and strengthening. We will have to do more by way of economic assistance and not less, to help it ride out the storm. It needs the red blood of fresh capital and private investments. Fortunately, the new coalition government, which has been long overdue, in which the non-socialist General Zionists are now an important partner, is creating a favorable climate for such investments. We must stimulate in every way the participation of American Jews in the industrial development of the country. In his "State of the Union" message, President Disenhower the other day declared it to be national policy to do whatever our government properly can to encourage the flow of private American investment abroad. American Jews will be performing a patriotic duty as well as strongly buttressing the new State of Israel by the investment of their capital and their experience. As we add to its economic strength, we also make it defensively strong. We American Zionists have long advocated private investment as the most constructive measure, in the long run, for building up a sound economy in Israel. The political constellation in Israel is now much more favorable to it. Let's get to work. Let's talk less about it and do more. A blueprint is not yet a building and a map is not yet the country itself.

A few thousand young American Jews who have completed their army service, volunteering annually to go to Israel to help in the upbuilding of the State for a year or two, or for as long as they wished, in whatever capacities they choose, would go far to fortify the spirit and morale of the people in Israel, and would forge even stronger links between the oldest and youngest democracies on earth.

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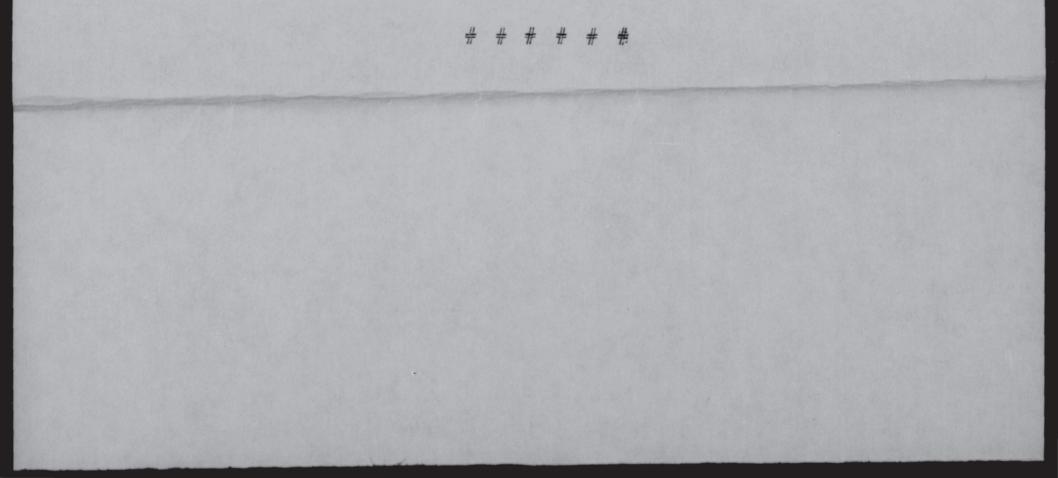
Israel can help itself in these critical times by achieving greater unity and good will and tolerance. Excessive party fragmentization and political intransigence are a luxury which an infant state can ill afford in times fraught with danger. Not enough has been done to establish a national, in place of a party, system of education, so that the rising generation of Israelis will be given a sense of national unity and loyalty, in place of bitter and divisive SILVER ADDRESS

secular or religious party loyalties. Perhaps the recent events in Prague and Moscow will prompt those who have talked of class struggle and the more extreme among them who have regarded themselves "as an inseparable part of the world revolutionary camp, headed by the Soviet Union," to reconsider their positions and to work consciously and affirmatively for national unity and solidarity. This must, of course, come from within Israel itself; but the Israelis owe it to themselves and to world Jewry to close ranks, for the times are grave.

American Jewry will be called upon to assume increasing responsibilities in the days to come, for Israel, for the Diaspora, for its own life at home. We need a strong sense of mission and destiny to prime us for these tasks. American Zionists must not relinquish or, if already relinquished, must recapture their position of leadership in American Jewish life. Zionists have been and are the bearers of the classic Jewish tradition in the world. Given a strong Zionist organization, there will be a wholesome Jewish community, mindful of its total not fragmentary responsibilities to Jewish life. It took a long time for the leaders in the government in Israel to grasp this truth. They have not fully grasped it yet, but they are learning it - the hard way.

We need a richer Jewish religious education for our children, and one of definite Hebraic content. For survival and significant living as a community, we need Jewish Laymen who are grounded in the faith, history and literature of their people. Zionists must take the lead in this most vital area of our life, upon which depends the harmony of our children's lives, their contribution as proud and loyal citizens to the totality of American life; their joyous identification with the historic Jewish community everywhere, and their eager participation in the upbuilding of the State of Israel.

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complacency of those who believe that Russia will never risk a major war.

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The other disturbing thing is the turn toward the Arabs. It will be remembered that the Kremlin antagonized the Arabs by favoring the partition of Palestine and was one of the first Governments to recognize the State of Israel. In the early years of the Soviet regime it proposed to establish a Russian homeland for persecuted Jews and opened such a refuge in Birobidjan in eastern Siberia. One can only guess at the complex of motives that nd dictated a change of front, but among rs them is obviously a desire to keep the Arab-Israeli conflict alive by assuring the Arab lands, as once Moscow as-sured Israel, that they have a powerful friend.

## Soviet 'Friendship'

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Instead of assuring the Arabs, however, this gesture should frighten them to death. It should set them thinking of what would happen to them if Russia should move into the power vacuum. Weak and defenseless as they are, from Syria and Lebanon to Iran and Afghanistan, the one trait they have in common is a passionate nationalism. All are newly and precariously independent, and their dominant aim is to maintain their independence. They are constantly seeking stability under strong men and constantly putting them out lest they lose what little independence they have.

Even the most primitive and remote Arab peasants have learned in recent years what Soviet "friendship" means. They see the fate of the independent nations of Europe that have come un-der Russian protection. If their leaders have any foresight, their reaction to the Russian rupture with Israel will be just the opposite of the response the Kremlin hopes for. The new Soviet benevolence to the Arab cause is really a threat, and if national policies were governed by wisdom, as they seldom are, the best answer to this threat would be an effort to end the state of war with Israel and take steps to join the Middle Eastern defense plan, now hanging in abeyance because of internal dissensions, the quarrel with Israel and Arab distrust of the West. This kers applies to Israel, too, now finally ejected from any possible position of "neutrality" between East and West. Whatever the latest Russian move implies, it bodes no good for the Middle East, Arabs or Israelis, and the sooner the peoples of the area draw the ob-vious conclusions from the shift of Soviet policy the safer they will be.