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Statement regarding statement of Dr. Judah Magnes, concerning
Jews living together with Arabs in a single state, 1929.

*Statement
regarding statement of Dr.
Magnes* *Nov 1929*

It is difficult on the basis of the incomplete reports of Dr. Magnes's statement and attitude to form any judgment. If Dr. Magnes, facing the realities of the situation in Palestine squarely recommends that a decisive political action shall be taken and adequate political machinery set up which shall recognize the existence in Palestine of two nations, his suggestion should receive calm and deliberate consideration, not abuse. Quite a number of Zionists both here and abroad believe that the ideal political form for Palestine is the one which obtains in countries like Switzerland and Canada by which two or more distinctive groups living in one territory are enabled to fulfill their national aspirations in peace and in cooperation. Under a proper constitutional set-up and adequate constitutional guarantees the idea of a Parliament for Palestine is feasible and may be desirable.

Clearly the status quo is unbearable. With the Mandatory Government, willingly or unwillingly, playing one group against the other, with an Arab population becoming yearly more politically self-conscious and resentful and with a Jewish population beguiled by a vague and variously interpreted Balfour Declaration, the situation in Palestine is bound to become worse and not better. Only a decisive political arrangement which will not do violence to the legitimate national aspirations of both Arabs and Jews can clear the air.

If Dr. Magnes counsells the Jews to surrender the political basis of Zionism and content themselves with an exclusively cultural program, then his counsel is one of defeat and surrender. It is a violation even of Achad Ha-amism. By surrendering our political position in Palestine Dr. Magnes hopes to pacify the Arabs. What guarantee has he for that? Political weakness on the part of a minority has never inspired the dominant majority to generosity or good-will.

As regards the tactical opportuneness of Dr. Magnes's utterances, I am too far removed from the scene of action to pass judgment.

Abba Hillel Silver.