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A year's advance, 1944.

A Year's Advance

*A Political Report Submitted to the Convention of the Zionist
Organization of America in Atlantic City, Sunday, October 15, 1944*

By DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
Chairman, Executive Committee
American Zionist Emergency Council

A Year's Advance

THE central fact which faced us during the past year was that in April the White Paper would come into full force as far as Jewish immigration was concerned. This was the most direct challenge to our Movement and our logical point of attack. We accordingly concentrated upon it. It was the weakest position held by the opposition: the opposition would be hard-put to justify the stoppage of Jewish immigration into the Jewish National Home at a time of frightful Jewish persecutions and of the actual menace of annihilation.

The pressure developed in this country on the subject of the White Paper towards the end of last year, was undoubtedly a major factor in obtaining a postponement of the deadline in respect to the 25,000 certificates which remained unused by April, 1944. The Colonial Office had hoped to dull the edge of our argument and to neutralize our efforts by announcing that the unused certificates would continue to be valid after April 1, so that, in fact, the doors of Palestine would not be closed to Jewish immigration. The Colonial Office has since resorted to various devices in an effort not to use up the remaining certificates but to hoard them in order not to be confronted with the necessity of reaffirming the old or announcing a new policy.

Had we built our campaign solely upon the White Paper, we would have been greatly discomfited by these maneuvers. The temptation was very great and so was the pressure, especially from many sections of American Jewry, even from groups of Zionists who should have known better. Our campaign, however, was launched on the positive program of the Jewish Commonwealth, and the reasons for this were clear. Whether the Jews had or did not have the right to free immigration into Palestine was predicated in the last analysis on whether they had or did not have the right to rebuild Palestine as a Jewish Commonwealth. In restricting Jewish immigration into Palestine for a term of years leading up to total prohibition, the White Paper had violated no abstract law of justice or humanity unless one regards all restriction or prohibition of immigration anywhere in the world as a violation of absolute and inalienable human rights. Many other countries, and some much larger than Palestine, were sharply restricting immigration or were altogether closed to immigration, and Palestine had admitted more refugees than a half-dozen countries ten times its size combined. The White Paper thus could not logically be attacked on any other ground but that which we took, namely, that Palestine was historically the land

of the Jewish people, that the nations of the world had formally recognized this historic connection of the Jewish people with Palestine and their right to return to it and to rebuild it as their national homeland.

The national homeland was, by the testimony of the responsible political leaders of the principal nations who were instrumental in proclaiming it, synonymous with the concept of a Jewish Commonwealth, a term which they, in fact, frequently employed. The establishment of Palestine as the Jewish National Home and its development into an autonomous Jewish Commonwealth, or in other words, the recognition of Palestine as a Jewish State as soon as it became a Jewish state in fact, that is, as soon as the Jews, given full opportunity, had made it such. This thought runs like a dominant refrain through the declarations of most of those who had a hand in the fashioning of the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate. This fact is clearly acknowledged in the Report of the Palestine Royal Commission, which stated, "It is obvious that His Majesty's Government could not commit itself to the establishment of a Jewish State. It could only undertake to facilitate the growth of a Home. It would depend mainly on the zeal and enterprise of the Jews whether the Home would grow big enough to become a State."

The Report then proceeds to quote Lloyd George who was Prime Minister at the time of the issuance of the Balfour Declaration to the effect that "if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them by the idea of a national home and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish Commonwealth." The Report also quotes President Wilson, General Smuts, Lord Robert Cecil, Sir Herbert Samuel, Mr. Winston Churchill to the same effect, saying that "they spoke or wrote in terms that could only mean that they contemplated the eventual establishment of a Jewish State," and "that leading British newspapers were equally explicit in their comments on the Declaration."

The ground which we accordingly took was that Great Britain had accepted a mandate to administer Palestine with a clear understanding and with the specific commitment that it would devote itself to this clearly defined end by facilitating Jewish immigration and by encouraging close settlement by Jews on the land. These commitments the White Paper grossly violated in letter and in spirit. Jewish zeal and enterprise were never permitted by the Mandatory power to develop the country "big enough" to become a Jewish

State, and the White Paper of 1939 would for all time put an end to the possibility of the Jewish people ever building their State there. The position which we took—the only logical position we could take—was that not

merely the White Paper of 1939 was unacceptable, but that any White Paper which makes difficult or impossible the establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth in the shortest possible time was unacceptable.

Why We Had to Reassert Our Basic Program

WE felt that it was necessary from every point of view, even from the purely “philanthropic-rescue-refugee” point of view, to reassert in the clearest possible terms our basic legal and historic rights to Palestine, rights which were fully understood and acknowledged twenty-five years ago, but which in the interim had been whittled down, legalistically twisted and distorted, and by the most violent dialectics reduced in such a way that were the present policy to remain in force, Palestine, far from ever becoming a Jewish National Home, would in fact become an Arab National Home—a term by the way, which was never employed nor even contemplated either in the Balfour Declaration or in the Palestine Mandate. It would be an Arab State in which the Jews would constitute a small and frozen minority, possessed of such minority group rights as Jews, following the last war, came to possess in Poland, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Austria, Greece, and elsewhere, rights which proved such broken and lamentable reeds to lean on.

Cynicism had gone so far in official circles that it had become the practice in highest quarters and in the publications of official British Information Services to suggest that such a minority status for the Jews of Palestine actually represented the *fulfillment* of what was originally contemplated by the program for the establishment of the Jewish National Home. This systematic frittering away of a great historic ideal and a grave and solemn international obligation voluntarily assumed by the mandatory power, had to be decisively, forcibly and dramatically exposed and rejected. The attempt had to be made to reverse the whole trend. The whole subject had to be brought back to basic and original considerations.

Unilateral interpretations by the Colonial Office which had been forced upon the Jewish people and the world had to be rejected in toto. We had to begin to speak again in clear and unmistakable terms of a Jewish State, of a Jewish Commonwealth, as we did a quarter of a century ago, and for centuries before then, and as our people will continue to do until the Jewish State finally becomes a reality. This, we assumed, was the mandate of Jewish history. This was our respon-

sibility to the Jewish people of today and to the generations yet unborn. This was the classic Zionist solution of the tragic and anomalous position of the Jews in the world. This was Zionism. This was the imperishable vision of Herzl:

The Jewish State is essential to the world; it will therefore be created. Am I stating what is not yet the case? Am I in advance of my time? Are the sufferings of the Jews not yet great enough? . . . If the present generation is too dull to understand it rightly, a future, a finer, and a better generation will arise to understand it. The Jews who wish for a state shall have it, and they will deserve it.

This was our guiding motif in all of our efforts during this past year. We furthermore took the ground that the United States had definite commitments in Palestine, not merely moral commitments in so far as President Wilson had a hand in the issuance of the Balfour Declaration and the American people had, through the Joint Resolution of the Congress of the United States in 1922, approved of it, but also specific legal commitments. Under the terms of a separate Convention with Great Britain in 1924, the American Government had ratified both the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate over Palestine stating that “the United States consents to the administration of Palestine by His Britannic Majesty, pursuant to the Mandate recited above.” In recognition of Palestine’s “special situation and the interests of the Jewish National Home,” the United States waived, with regard to Palestine, certain economic claims on which it had insisted in the case of all other mandates. Our government had furthermore insisted that the Convention “shall not be affected by any modification in the terms of the Mandate unless such modification shall have been assented to by the United States.” Our position was that the Mandate had been violently modified and, that in fact, its true purposes had been distorted, and that the United States had neither been consulted about any modifications nor had assented to them.

Zionism—Answer to a Perennial Refugee Problem

NOR could we properly put our case on a purely refugee or asylum basis. This was not Zionism. The problem of Jewish refugees has been with us since the beginning of the diaspora. It is the sad and inescapable by-product of exile and national homelessness. It is the very thing which Zionism attempts to solve not by finding new asylums or immigration opportunities, here and there, but by striking at the very roots of the problem—at the fact of *Galut* itself, *Galut* which creates in every age and in every land, sooner or later, a Jewish refugee problem. It should be remembered—and Zionists sometimes forget this fact in their eagerness to serve a momentary expediency and to achieve a slight momentary gain—it should be remembered that Herzlian Zionism developed at a time when there were large immigration opportunities for Jews in many parts of the world. Zionism did not come in response to an immigration pressure.

In pre-Hitler days, the Jews of Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, France, Holland and other lands were not thinking of emigration. They felt themselves thoroughly at home and fully adjusted in their respective countries. But events have now demonstrated that Zionism should have been as much of a concern to them as to the Jews in countries where unfavorable political and economic conditions did stimulate emigration. As long as we, as a people, possess no strong national center, as long as we remain nationally homeless, every Jewish community anywhere in the world, regardless of its momentary or prolonged favorable status, is under the manifold threat of *Galut*. With his customary clairvoyance Herzl pointed out—and I quote him again because the more you return to that giant, the more you are amazed at his prophetic insight, his clairvoyance, his profound grasp of the fundamental facts in Jewish experience—Herzl pointed out that “the longer anti-Semitism lies in abeyance the more fiercely it will break out.”

There are many Jews who still beguile themselves today with the comforting thought that Jewish persecutions will end with the advance of civilization. It is, however, a fundamental error to assume that Jewish persecutions occur only in dark ages, among backward peoples. The expulsion of the Jews from Spain took place at the height of the Renaissance in one of the most glorious and exciting centuries of the world when science, art, scholarship and exploration were in full tide and when Spain, as well as Portugal, was enjoying an illustrious period of great literature, intellectual ferment and unprecedented exploration and coloniza-

tion. And the most terrifying and bestial Jewish persecutions of all times took place in the twentieth century, and of all places, in the most “advanced” country in Europe—Germany! . . .

There is prevalent among our people a glib notion that ours is just another minority problem, like all others, which will be solved when political progress catches up with it. This is false. Ours is a unique minority problem, for we are a minority everywhere and we have no national homeland anywhere. Ours is a uniquely abnormal status, and therefore anti-minority prejudices have selective killing effect upon us, like some substances which leave normal tissue cells unharmed but are deadly to a specific abnormal tissue. National homelessness is the problem. National restoration is the solution.

Thus we concluded that on the eve of the great international adjustments and orientations which the Second World War was destined to bring about, and at a time when tremendous decisions would undoubtedly be made affecting the future of nations, large and small, for generations to come, it would be the height of folly for us to confine our demands to a matter of immigration schedules and certificates and not to present our full case and our basic historical needs and rights to the tribunal of American and world public opinion.

AND here I should like to say, that the sound sense of American Jewry fully grasped the significance of the Jewish Commonwealth issue and therefore made it central in the deliberations and in the decisions of the American Jewish Conference. The enemies of our cause likewise grasped its full significance when they finally resolved to break away from the Conference and to discredit it over this very issue. Whatever else of significance the American Jewish Conference will have to its credit when the historian finally comes to strike the balance, the overwhelming endorsement which this great democratic and representative assembly of American Jews gave to the idea of the Jewish Commonwealth will stand out as its most significant achievement. Apart from its other achievements, this alone would have fully justified its existence.

The sound judgment of American Jewry which is today far more politically literate and mature than it was a generation ago, refused to permit itself to be turned aside from the urgent and imperative responsibility and opportunity to speak out in resolute approval of the one fundamental solution for the manifold ills which afflict Jewish life in all parts of the world: it re-

fused to be turned aside by any spurious pleas of expediency, of preserving unity in American Jewry, by questions of "timeliness" and other specious arguments and threats. The American Jewish Conference fully grasped the urgency of the problems of rescue and relief, but it saw them in their true historic perspective. It devoted itself both to the temporary and the permanent

solutions without sacrificing one to the other.

The endorsement of the Jewish Commonwealth by the American Jewish Conference was powerfully helpful in all our work during the year. American political leaders correctly appraised the composition and character of the Conference and the collective will registered there in behalf of the Jewish Commonwealth.

The Council's Public Relations Campaign

THUS we concentrated all of our efforts during the year on explaining to the American people and to our Government the aims and the reasons for a Jewish Commonwealth. I cannot give you a detailed report here. Much of our activity is known to you. We circulated books, tracts, pamphlets, press releases by the thousands, by the tens of thousands, by the hundreds of thousands. We placed our literature in every key center in our country. We interviewed editors, writers, news commentators and others who help mold public opinion. We arranged meetings throughout the country, sent speakers to tell our story and organized large and impressive conferences. A great demonstration meeting was held under our auspices in Madison Square Garden on the eve of the White Paper's effective date. It was to the non-Jewish world that we directed our attention principally, and in this we had the invaluable cooperation of the American Palestine Committee headed by that staunch friend, Senator Robert F. Wagner, and of the Christian Council for Palestine.

We placed every month, a very helpful political bulletin, "Palestine," so ably edited by Mr. Louis Lipsky, in the hands of 16,000 leaders in American educational, political and religious life. To counteract the legend which had been studiously cultivated in Washington and which was accepted in the highest circles that Palestine was a starved little country, about the size of a handkerchief, and that to send people there in large numbers was to consign them to wretched poverty and starvation, we publicized in every way Dr. Lowdermilk's magnificent book, "Palestine, Land of Promise," which has now gone through five editions in the United States and been republished in England, and which has made innumerable converts and friends for our cause. Under the auspices of our Council an impressive dinner was tendered to Dr. Lowdermilk in Washington, attended by many scientists and government officials. This was the second important meeting which was held in our national capital, the first—an all-day session—having been held under the auspices of the American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council for Pales-

tine, attended by leading Christian laymen and ministers from all parts of the country and climaxed by an impressive dinner in the evening, addressed by foremost men in the political and religious life of America. A third very successful regional conference was held last Tuesday in Philadelphia, and I have heard nothing but glowing reports from our friends in Philadelphia of the quality and character and effectiveness of this conference in their city. Four other such conferences in other parts of the country are scheduled to take place in the coming weeks.

Extensive publicity was also given to the Jordan Valley Authority project and to the engineering studies and the important work of economic planning for irrigation, power and development which are being carried on by the Commission on Palestine Surveys under the direction of Mr. Emanuel Neumann. Our purpose was clear: to dissipate the false propaganda which has been spread concerning Palestine's limited absorptive capacity as an argument for the retention of the White Paper and the curbing of immigration into Palestine. To a marked degree we have been successful in combatting this argument.

A special and successful activity was carried on among the ranks of American labor, in which we had the eager and most generous assistance of the leaders of organized labor in the United States.

The Emergency Council published last week a very important volume, "America and Palestine," a volume of over 500 pages, giving the history of America's deep and continuous interest in the Jewish National Home over a period of many years, including all important documents bearing on the subject and recording the opinions of over 400 members of the present Congress of the United States—77% of the entire body—in favor of our movement. This volume will now be widely distributed and placed wherever it will do the most good.

The manifold activities of the Emergency Council have been supplemented, of course, by the very effective and important Zionist propaganda which was carried on throughout the country by the Zionist Organization of America, as well as by Hadassah, the Mizrahi and

the Poale Zion. The Emergency Council is no more than the political arm of these national organizations, in whose behalf and by whose authority it functions. It is not a membership body. The leaders of the Zionist Organization of America are quite naturally leaders also within the Emergency Council.

There were many other activities which were carried on, which because of their confidential nature cannot be publicly discussed. In political work, generally, persons in charge are at a certain disadvantage because they cannot, for reasons of public policy, report on many matters as fully as they would like to.

The Introduction of the Palestine Resolutions

OUR main activity during the first part of the year was the introduction of the Palestine Resolutions in Congress. Why did we do that? So many people, especially when it looked for a time as though the resolutions would be defeated, were eager to pounce upon us by their post-mortem, so-to-speak, their after-thought wisdom, to criticize us for having dared to take such a dangerous step, fraught with such serious consequences. We did it for this reason: if our cause was to be placed on the national and international agenda, if the attention of the American people and of the world was ever to be drawn forcibly to our problem on the eve of the effective date of the White Paper, and if the official silence in Washington was ever to be broken, the most effective—perhaps the only—way in which it could be done, was by producing the discussion of our problem in the world's greatest forum of opinion—the Congress of the United States. What happens there is news, national and international. In fact, the very discussion of a problem before such a forum is a political event.

Our investigation indicated beyond any reasonable doubt that sentiment among the members of Congress was highly favorable. Our nation-wide poll, taken by our three hundred community contact groups all over the country, before we introduced the Resolutions, made it clear that when and if the Resolutions came to a vote they would pass by very large majorities. No bill was ever ushered into Congress under more favorable auspices. The introduction of the Wright-Compton Resolution into the House was preceded by enthusiastic statements of endorsement on the part of both the majority and minority leaders. Even more dramatic was the setting of the Senate Resolution, sponsored by Senators Wagner and Taft. Moving speeches of support were delivered on the floor by the majority and minority leaders of the Senate.

We called into play the splendid apparatus of our local emergency committees which we had been carefully building up for months. No tribute deserving enough can be paid to these local leaders for the devotion and intelligence with which they responded to our

call. Both Congressmen and veteran newspapermen commented with surprise on the amount of national interest which had been aroused. One of the gratifying features of the campaign was the large proportion of communications, literally tens of thousands of them, from *non-Jewish* organizations and individuals.

Hearings on our Resolution were held before the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House for four days in the month of February. The chief spokesmen, the representatives of our Movement, were such members of the Zionist Organization of America as Dr. Wise, Dr. Goldstein, Mr. Herman Shulman, Mr. Louis Lipsky, Dr. Heller, and Mr. Emanuel Neumann, who presented our case and acquitted themselves with distinction, besides the fine representatives of the Hadassah, the Mizrachi, the Poale Zion, as well as others, not identified with these organizations. As a result, the officially published hearings of the House Foreign Affairs Committee contains one of the most complete, well-documented and convincing statements of our cause to be found anywhere in Zionist literature. The very existence of that official government record is a most important achievement. The inclusion in it of the Arab and anti-Zionist arguments serve but to strengthen our position. No dispassionate person reading this record can withstand the conclusion that the Zionist case is unshakable.

The intervention of the War Department, as you well know, brought about a postponement of legislative action for military reasons. And when that happened I began looking around for a hide-out, a fox-hole, for myself and my colleagues. The resolutions will no doubt come up for action as soon as Congress reconvenes. The military objections were withdrawn three days ago. We had to wait patiently for months before this gratifying news finally reached us in a letter which Secretary of War Stimson sent to Senator Taft. Congressman Bloom, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee announced in the public press this morning that he is bringing up the Palestine Resolutions before the Committee for action, on November 15, the day after Congress reconvenes.

THE deferment of the Resolutions made it more than ever imperative to get an expression of the views of our government without delay, lest the postponement of action on the Resolutions be exploited by our enemies. Concerted protests, from a number of Arab States, you will remember, were reaching Washington—inspired protests—and they synchronized with the deferment action. Here again the country made itself heard. The result was the highly important statement of the President of the United States which, at an interview on March 9, 1944, he authorized the Co-Chairmen of the Emergency Council, to issue in his name:

The President authorized us to say that the American government has never given its approval to the White Paper of 1939. The President is happy that the doors of Palestine are today open to Jewish refugees and that when future decisions are reached, full justice will be done to those who seek a Jewish National Home, for which our government and the American people have always had the deepest sympathy and today more than ever, in view of the tragic plight of hundreds of thousands of homeless Jewish Refugees.

This statement represented the first break for us over a period of many years and was the preliminary to an even more important announcement which you were privileged to listen to today.

It should be pointed out that this statement of President Roosevelt is fundamentally different in character from American pro-Zionist pronouncements made in previous years. Such earlier pronouncements were always presumed to be in the nature of endorsements of a British policy for which Britain herself had been anxious to get international approval and sanction. The situation in 1944 was radically different because Britain had reversed its policy. The Presidential statement of March 9 was not one of approval of British policy but rather an expression of reproof and represented for the first time a divergence of viewpoint. It was, in fact, the first time that the American Government took a position on the Palestine question which was at variance with the current British position. And it came on top of all the Arab protests—as if in reply and rejection of them. From this viewpoint the President's declaration was of great historic significance.

The Resolution and the Party Planks

FROM Washington the scene of our political activities shifted, in the summer, to Chicago where the National Conventions of both national parties were scheduled.

We believed that the favorable sentiment of the American people for our cause, the expression of which was for the time being deferred in the halls of Congress, should be heard at the great political conventions. What happened is now history. The two magnificent planks which were included in the political platforms of both parties, represented an act unprecedented in American political history. It again dramatically served notice on the world that the American people was overwhelmingly in sympathy with the aims of the Zionist Movement. The significance of these planks as well as of the President's declaration of March 9, did not escape the attention of the Arab leaders.

Some bitter foes of Zionism, some among our own people, have tried to console themselves with the thought that these planks are only the products of an election year. Foes of Zionism in Great Britain have also hugged this illusion to their bosoms. The fact of the matter is, however, that whenever a consensus of American public opinion on Palestine was taken, it was overwhelmingly in favor of our movement. The Congress-

sional Resolution on Palestine which was unanimously passed in 1922, was not passed in an election year. Time and again great national labor conventions, church conventions and conferences of other important bodies which reflect the thought of America, have voted warm endorsement of our cause. It is regrettable that our State Department has not, through the years, been responsive to this sentiment of the American people and Congress. Our cause would then be far more advanced than it is today. There has always been an unfortunate contradiction between American official pronouncements favoring the Jewish National Home and concrete action or lack of action. We publicized the pronouncements. We did not sufficiently publicize the lack of action.

In passing, it should be noted that our cause has powerful friends in both political parties. We have succeeded in getting a friendly hearing from all groups in American public life because of the absolutely non-partisan character of our Movement. The Zionist Movement of the United States is committed to no political party. This non-partisan character of our Movement is a political asset which we should zealously preserve.

American Zionists, in the exercise of their privileges as American citizens, will vote for one party or another, for one candidate or another. American Zionists are to

be found in the ranks of both the Democratic and Republican and other parties, and when they speak in endorsement of one political party or another, they do so not as Zionist spokesmen, but as American citizens.

This is fully understood by the leaders of both political parties and because of it we have been given hearty cooperation by both parties. Any other policy would be perilous and in the long run disastrous.

The Roosevelt Statement—Climax of the Year

TODAY you were privileged to behold with your own eyes the climax of a year's work on your part and on our part, along this well-defined, clearly thought-out line which we have been pursuing during the entire year. The message which the President of the United States sent through Senator Wagner to the convention of the Zionist Organization of America, will remain one of the most important Zionist documents, one of the most important Jewish documents, in the archives of our people.

It is a complete statement of the Zionist position, only one not made by an official Zionist, but by the President of the United States! And it is not only a statement of a position but back of it is a pledge of one of the great personalities of our age, a pledge to work for its achievement—"... if re-elected I shall help to bring about its realization."

The importance of this statement cannot be over-estimated. It will not be under-estimated in London, in Jerusalem, in Cairo, in any other part of the world. It puts America clearly behind our program for the creation of a Jewish Commonwealth. Think what wonderful new vistas that opens up for us for the immediate future, and for the long days ahead, and what a superb vindication that is of the position which we took, of the position which we maintained in spite of all criticism, in spite of all deprecation—what a vindication of the line and the program and the technique which we maintained all through the year!

You will recall a year ago at the American Jewish Conference the timid souls, even among our own, even among our Zionist leaders, who said, "Oh, don't talk about a Jewish Commonwealth; it is premature; it is extreme; it will alienate friends; you will never get a hearing in Washington." If, on the platform of the Waldorf-Astoria a year ago I would have arisen and said that within twelve months the President of the United States would come out and declare, "I am for a free and democratic Jewish Commonwealth," they would have laughed me to scorn as a madman. We were the extremist Zionists then, the doctrinaires, the impractical people! . . .

Well now the program of the extremists and the doc-

trinaires has become the accepted political position of the greatest power on earth—the United States of America. I speak of this because there is a lesson in it for us Zionists for the future. We may have such moments recurring time and again. Don't compromise on basic Jewish rights, for the sake of expediency, for the sake of a spurious unity! Demand what our people is historically entitled to demand, all of it; insist on it, work for it, and wait!

WE shall continue to press energetically from here on for the *implementation* of the Jewish Commonwealth. We regard that as the statesmanlike solution, not alone of our problem but of a world problem which has plagued and will continue to plague the political life and conscience of mankind. It is the right solution not alone for the Jewish people but for the quickening and vivification of the political, economic and social life of the entire Near East—one of the great undeveloped areas of the world which fairly cries for development in order that health and a higher standard of living may be brought to an impoverished, disease-ridden and appallingly illiterate population.

Jews are coming to that part of the world not as exploiters to drain away its wealth, but to create wealth and well-being. Jews are coming there as settlers and colonists to cooperate with the Arabs in a great cooperative enterprise for mutual profit and common benefit. We are the friends of the Arabs, perhaps the only truly disinterested friends they have, for we come with no imperialistic purposes. We come to invest our own substance and our own skills, our own sweat and blood in that small corner of the vast world of the Near East which is historically ours, and in the process, we hope to stimulate the development of all the adjacent Arab lands. We should like nothing better than to extend a hand of friendship and helpfulness to the Arab peoples roundabout. We are eager to cooperate with the Arabs in all good will and sincerity. The Arabs in the Jewish Commonwealth will enjoy full and equal rights; their cultural and religious group life will be safeguarded. We respect the legitimate aspirations of the Arab States and peoples toward political independ-

ence and unity. We do not combat these aspirations. On the contrary, a Jewish Palestine can help them.

It is our hope that the Arabs will return to their true and fundamental line of national interest which was well understood by the great leaders of their race at the time of the Balfour Declaration and which made of King Feisal an understanding friend of our cause. From this line, unfortunately, the Arabs deviated sharply when they became disillusioned by the failure of the Allies to live up to the promises which were made to them

touching their full political independence in Syria, Iraq and elsewhere. The future destiny of the Arab peoples and of their civilization which once was the glory and the envy of the entire world does not rest upon the submergence and absorption of the little country of Palestine into the complex of Arab states. But the future destiny of the Jewish people and of its civilization quite definitely rests upon the re-establishment of their national life in Palestine. To the Arabs, Palestine is at best but on the periphery of their national life. To the Jewish people it is the *sine qua non*.

The United Nations and Palestine

THE three great powers who are assuming the grave responsibility for the new world order which is to be fashioned after this war must, as temporary trustees for the community of nations, assume responsibility also for the final settlement of Palestine and must take into consideration all the above factors. It is hardly conceivable that the final decision will be left to Great Britain exclusively. Palestine is not a colony of Great Britain. Great Britain has never been more than a trustee under a specific mandate from fifty-two nations. France, Russia, the United States and other countries were closely consulted before the Balfour Declaration was issued. Palestine and the solution of the Jewish problem were always regarded as of international concern. The Near and Middle East is an area in which the interests of both the United States and Russia as well as of Great Britain have been expanding in recent years.

It is questionable whether Great Britain alone, unaided by the cooperation of the United States and perhaps Russia, can, in the light of her experience in the administration of Palestine in the last quarter of a century, adopt a new line which will achieve the desired result. The traditional approach of the Colonial Office to the question—that of appeasing the Arabs for the sake of holding them loyal to the Empire—offers no promise whatsoever of a satisfactory solution. It is in fact a bankrupt solution. It did not win that loyalty for which Jewish rights were so consistently sacrificed, as British experience during the war with Arab non-cooperation and in some instances actual treachery in Iraq, Egypt and Syria, amply demonstrates. Nor were the Indian Moslems won over. Were there no question of a Jewish National Home in Palestine today, the position of Great Britain in the Middle East would be no whit more secure. The Arab problem as far as the Empire

is concerned is actually only remotely connected with Palestine, though Arab nationalism for purposes of propaganda has sought to create a contrary impression.

British declarations of sympathy in favor of an Arab Federation have behind them the motive of the expansion of British influence in a more or less unified Arab world, to the exclusion of all other influences. Arab conferences have so far indicated no basis for federation or unity except agreement on opposition to Zionism. Arab politicians have sought to make political capital for themselves by vying with one another in the degree of their opposition to Zionism. Those in Great Britain who advocate an Arab Federation may be inclined still further to sacrifice the Jewish National Home to this Arab-oriented imperial policy. If that is the prevailing opinion in British Government circles, which we however refuse to credit, then certainly Great Britain, which holds an international trust for Palestine, should be asked by her great allies not to decide the matter without consultation with them. We believe however that there is much goodwill for our cause, especially in the highest political circles, in Great Britain, and our confidence in the great, dynamic leader of his people, Mr. Winston Churchill, remains unshaken.

THE United States has large and growing interests in the Middle East, hitherto regarded as exclusively a British sphere of influence. Through the Middle East Supply Center, our government is participating actively in helping to meet the economic needs of the countries of that region. We have built important military bases and American troops are found everywhere there. We have sent advisers to some of the Middle Eastern countries, a Minister to Saudi Arabia and another to Syria and Lebanon. An American agricultural mission and a military mission were sent to Ibn Saud and the latter's

two sons visited the United States last year. We extended lend-lease aid, especially in Saudi Arabia. During this year the announcement was made that the United States Government intended to build a pipeline between the Saudi Arabian fields and the Mediterranean. The plan for a government project was finally abandoned in favor of private construction assisted by government loans, and the line may be built after the war.

It seems clear that the economic and therefore the political influence of the United States in the Middle East is bound to increase markedly in the coming years. America has a definite stake in the peace, progress and prosperity of that very important segment of the world of which Palestine is a part. Palestine because of the enterprise, skill, scientific equipment and the advanced, progressive character of the Jewish population, can become a dynamo of energy for the rapid development of that entire area. There is a close bond of sympathy between the Yishuv and the United States. Palestine can become a friendly outpost for legitimate American interests in the Middle East.

The Soviet Union, too, is increasingly interested in the Middle East. It wishes to come closer to the Mediterranean world. It has sent an ambassador to Egypt and another to French Africa. It has recognized the Republics of Syria and Lebanon and has established diplomatic relations with them. This growing interest has been reflected also in a noticeably changed attitude towards Zionism. There is a friendlier approach and a desire to become more fully acquainted with Zionist

objectives and Jewish achievements in Palestine. Ambassador Maisky's visit to Palestine was significant and other approaches have followed.

Great Britain will undoubtedly retain a powerful position in the Middle East after the war, the United States and the Soviet Union to lesser degrees. A common policy on the part of the major powers who are being called upon today to pool their thinking and to take common action on many international issues—some of them far graver, more involved and difficult than that of Palestine—would make possible a decisive solution, dictated by true statesmanship and backed by overwhelming authority. Together, they could brush aside all the tangled web of disingenuousness, legal shuffling and obstructionism with which a stodgy colonial bureaucracy has surrounded and almost stifled a noble and enkindling ideal. They would not only proclaim the Jewish Commonwealth, but would extend to it that material aid and credit which they will undoubtedly extend to other countries to assist them in building or rebuilding their national economy. The establishment of the Jewish Commonwealth would then be part of a comprehensive program of effective aid, political and economic, to the neighboring Arab countries which would thus enter a new era of political independence and economic growth and prosperity.

We pray that there may be enough vision and large-heartedness among the leaders of the great powers to see the problem of Palestine in its true perspective, and to act accordingly.

Why We Must Press for an Immediate Decision

AND to act now! The war in Europe is approaching its end. Decisions must be taken even now with regard to the repatriation or resettlement of the Jews who are still alive in the liberated countries. Plans are now being made by bodies like UNRRA and the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees for the movement of refugees after the war. Most Jewish refugees wish to go to Palestine. The persistence of the White Paper policy will produce plans for the resettlement of Jews which may prove impractical and futile or which will do violence to the preference of the refugees themselves. Sir Clifford Heathcote-Smith, representative in Italy of the Inter-Governmental Committee on Refugees, declared regretfully that "only a few of the refugees in Italy had volunteered to accept Italian citizenship, and that most of them wish to go to Palestine." He didn't like it. He thought they were victims of Zionist propaganda.

None of the refugees from Germany wished to return there, and only a few from Austria were willing to go back to that country. Mr. David Schweitzer, of the American Hias-Ica Emigration Association (Hicem), the largest non-Zionist Jewish emigration agency, has recently declared: "The Jews of Europe do not engage in debates for or against Palestine, but only think of possibilities of reaching it." And he pointed out that one important factor influencing the refugees in centering their attention on Palestine was their desire to "bring up their children in the Jewish Home Land."

But the certificates available under the White Paper quota are coming to an end. Soon the doors will be closed in fact. A prompt decision is imperative.

Political decisions in the Near East are not waiting upon the conclusion of the war. Witness the recognition of the independence of Syria and Lebanon in which our State Department cooperated so energetically.

In addition, as has been pointed out in a memorandum which we submitted to our Government, there is grave cause for disquiet, touching the recent dispatch from Cairo, suggesting the possibility of a postponement of any decision in regard to Palestine not merely until the end of the European war, but even until the war in the Far East has been concluded. Not merely would this mean that possibly for a period of several years to come, the White Paper would govern in Palestine; not merely would it prolong the paralyzing state of uncertainty as far as Palestine is concerned; it would impose a disastrous delay in the way of the transfer to Palestine of that part of European Jewry which seeks resettlement there. The Arabs in the meantime are working actively. They are preparing to build up a large political propaganda against the Jewish National Home both here and abroad, of which the meeting of representatives of Arab countries in Alexandria is but one example. The more time elapses, the more difficult the situation will become and the more remote the possibility of a favorable solution. For all these reasons, accordingly, it is of the utmost importance that a new policy on Palestine should issue, and issue at once.

WE are afraid that a new policy will not issue unless a new approach is made and a different attitude is adopted towards our problem by the great powers, especially by Great Britain and the United States.

When David Ben-Gurion, that veteran leader of the Yishuv, addressing the opening session of the newly-elected Assefat Hanivcharim, declared that the democracies have not even attempted to rescue Jews from extermination in German-dominated countries, he was stating the sad and simple truth. And by democracies he meant Great Britain and he meant the United States.

The world was silent at the ruin and outrage of a whole people which beggars all human speech, which is beyond words, beyond tears, beyond all utterable woe. Here and there one heard a feeble protest! Here and there a gesture of sympathy! But no uproar of outraged humanity, no furious outburst at the assassination of a people! A ten year cycle of slaughter and assault at the hands of a people and a government lost to all sense of shame or pity, which sacked and ravaged a thousand Jewish communities, slew three million men, women and children in horrible human abattoirs and crematoriums, and filed the highways of the earth with hordes of frightened, fleeing refugees, evoked from the civilized world, from the democracies, from our own country, a few perfunctory acts of rescue which resulted in little more than nothing. A spiritual palsy seemed to have attacked the world, and the mildewed spirit of this mouldering age found all sorts of excuses for doing so little—legal difficulties, transportation difficulties, im-

migration laws and what not. Nowhere was there evident a great moral exertion, nowhere an heroic enterprise of the challenged spirit of man surmounting all the quiddities of technicalities and all the barriers of routine. And so myriads of our precious sons and daughters perished who might otherwise be alive today!

The story of the Evian and the Bermuda Conferences need not be rehearsed here. They belong to the shabby furniture of Heartbreak House of World War II. One can only recall the words of Miss Rathbone, that fine English woman who devotes herself so wholeheartedly to the cause of the refugees: "The conferences are not to blame; the nations who constituted them were to blame." The United States is not without its full share of blame for their abject failure.

Did our country open its doors wide to rescue trapped and doomed men, women and children? Did our country offer even temporary asylum to them in numbers commensurate with the enormity of the tragedy? Breckenridge Long, Assistant Secretary of State, sought to give such an impression at the hearings before the Foreign Affairs Committee last November.

We are generous in our praise. We must also have the courage to blame, where blame is due.

Actually the number of immigrants who came to the United States in the ten years, 1933-34, were some 450,000 of whom about 270,000 came from Nazi-dominated countries. Of them only 163,423 were Jews. In the years of slaughter, 1939 to 1942, only 60,000 Jews from Nazi-dominated countries reached the United States. Actually the number of visas which were granted was far below the quota allowed by our immigration laws and the number of immigrants who were admitted to the United States, in some years, was only a small fraction of the number which could have been admitted under the quota.

On September 26, Attorney General Biddle announced that "for the fourteenth consecutive year immigration fell below the 100,000 mark and was substantially less than the legal quota. Because of the war and transport difficulties only one twentieth of the quota for countries outside the Western Hemisphere was filled last year." Could not transport difficulties have been overcome, as they were in the case of a quarter of a million Nazi and Fascist prisoners who were brought to this country during that same period? The War Refugee Board came upon the scene, unfortunately too late, and though it tried earnestly and hard to help in rescue on a large scale, it was doomed to meagre accomplishments.

When the horrors of Oswiecim, Treblinka and Maidanek became public knowledge, and the cry for free ports and temporary asylums was raised, an announcement was made by our government that it would per-

mit a thousand refugees to enter our country for the duration and that they would be kept in a detention camp until the end of the war. A thousand refugees—and from areas in Europe where they were already safe! Little Sweden in one month gave refuge to almost the entire Jewish population of Denmark—9,000 souls—and did not put them in a detention camp! Neither did Mexico nor Canada, which also allowed small groups of refugees to enter on a temporary basis.

We worked hard, many organizations worked hard, and made representations, but the bitter fact remains, good friends, that the mountain had labored and brought forth—Oswego! . . .

There is a sobering lesson here for those among us Jews who always maintain that it is easier to achieve results for our people on the purely humanitarian level—rescue and refugee aid—than on the political and national level. The fact is that all our representations to our government to help save a doomed people in any way whatsoever resulted in pitifully little.

It is not that the people in Washington are hostile to us. They are friendly and kindly disposed. They understand the disaster which overtook our people. But they also know that immigrants and refugees in large numbers are not wanted in the United States. They will not be wanted anywhere after the war.

THE frank facing of this truth is called for rather than self-flagellation for ineffectiveness and disunity, or angry and helpless beating with our hands and heads on the iron bars of unyielding reality.

There have been various carefully reasoned estimates of the number of Jews in Europe who will survive this war, of the number of displaced Jews who will be able or willing to return to their original homes and of the number of Jews for whom new homes will have to be sought. Concerning the latter category the estimates vary from one to two million.

We may also be confronted in the coming year with an emigration problem in Arab countries. In the Middle East, with the development of Arab independence and the growth of extreme Arab nationalism, anti-Jewish tendencies have been on the increase. In Yemen, where the Jews have lived for a thousand years, an oppressive situation developed in the last generation or two, long before the proclamation of the Balfour Declaration. The Jews have been deprived of economic opportunities and subjected to insult and degradation. In Yemen, persecution has been on a religious basis. In Iraq the anti-Jewish tendencies have gone along with the growth of extreme nationalism and have, in the last decade, been stimulated by fascist ideas. The recent pro-Nazi Rashid Ali al-Gailani *coup* against the British was accompanied by an attack against the Jews of Bag-

dad which has been described as a veritable pogrom. We must be prepared to offer a haven of refuge to the Jews of the Orient. And who knows from what other lands? The position of no single Jewish community in the world has been improved by the catastrophic events of the last decade.

Where are the new homes for these one to two million Jews of Europe and possibly many others from Oriental countries, to be found? Who wants these immigrants? Who will welcome them? Post-war settlements may involve certain group transfers of population across national borders in an effort to solve the difficult problem of minorities, but they are not likely to inaugurate a program of free immigration for displaced people who wish to find new homes. The officials who are dealing with the problem of post-war resettlement of refugees are fully aware of this fact. They know that there will be very few countries open to Jewish immigration after the war. Accordingly they point hopefully from time to time to the possibility of colonizing Jewish immigrants in one or another part of the world—Angola, Madagascar, Guiana or elsewhere. Even the name of San Domingo, which was ushered in a few years ago, with the roar of a lion, and went out with the bleat of a shorn lamb, has been revived. This is the favorite device of those who recognize that the situation calls for a mass unitary settlement of Jews somewhere—but who will not or are not allowed to agree on Palestine as the one fit and logical place.

I SAID at the beginning of this report that the central fact which faced us during the past year was the threat that the White Paper would come into full force in the spring. A second significant fact confronting us was the growing probability of the approaching end of the war. The Axis forces had been driven out of North Africa. The war had moved away from the Middle East. The Axis influence in the Arab countries was growing weaker. Arab politicians were quick to read the handwriting on the wall and to proclaim their devotion to the cause of the United Nations, although some of them were still broadcasting Axis propaganda in Arabic from Axis centers. Feverish political activity was developed by these Arab leaders, some of it not without encouragement from British sources. An increasingly active anti-Zionist propaganda spread through Arab countries. From Cairo it spread to the rest of the world, particularly to the United States.

Under the threat of political upheavals and bloody riots an attempt was made to effect a final settlement of the Palestine problem favorable to the Arabs while the war was still on. By a final settlement was meant the total liquidation of Zionist objectives. A panic mood was created to achieve a precipitate decision, before the

world had a chance to make up its mind deliberately. Reports from British and American intelligence agents poured into Washington and agents of our Government sped back and forth bringing reports from the Near East, all calculated to create the impression that unless Arab claims were immediately satisfied a colossal disaster was unavoidable. American journalists also played their role in this campaign. And American newspapers, foremost among them, the Jewishly owned and edited "New York Times," went all-out to spread this propaganda among the American people.

The Palestine Government abetted this campaign by staging well-advertised public gun-running trials and arm searches and by broadcasting the violent attacks of the prosecuting attorney on the Jewish Agency and Zionist leaders.

All this was of course tied up with the approaching effective date of the White Paper. It was calculated to win sympathy for the stoppage of Jewish immigration into Palestine.

In Washington the campaign was also tied up with the projected pipeline across Saudi Arabia. Ibn Saud had declared himself against Zionism. Nothing must be said or done to offend Ibn Saud or the Arabs generally and endanger the pipe-line. Zionism suddenly became tabu in Washington. Senators and congressmen were approached by government officials and informed of the dangers lurking in sympathetic expressions in behalf of Zionism. Official Washington withdrew almost as one man from the subject of Palestine and it became extremely difficult to get even those officials who had heretofore been most sympathetic and generous in their expressions, to say anything about Jewish Palestine. There was even the danger, narrowly averted, of an

official request for silence about the Palestine question on the part of the Jews—a request which was to have been issued over the signatures of the chiefs of the Governments of the United States and Great Britain.

So noticeable was the changed climate in Washington that I took occasion to draw public attention to it in an address which I delivered at the UPA Conference in Philadelphia in 1943. There was the real danger that our Government, under the pressure of powerful American economic interests in the Near East would pass from an attitude of friendly neutrality towards our movement to one of active opposition.

It became an essential part of our work during the past year to counter-act this vicious propaganda, to break this conspiracy of silence, to arouse the conscience of the American people against the threat which hung over the Jewish National Home and to demand from our Government a declaration of its true position and intention. The conspiracy of silence was broken. Palestine remained very much on the national agenda during the year. The attempt to stampede a decision hostile to Zionism failed. The oil issue after a while ceased to boil. Satisfactory agreements were reached. It was not necessary to sacrifice us for a pipe-line after all. Our government did not drift into active opposition to our movement. On the contrary. The President of the United States uttered significant words which proved very unpalatable and discouraging to the enemies of our movement. To that extent we succeeded. However, we had not elicited any clear statement as to the definite position and active intent of our government until President Roosevelt spoke this morning to us.

The Enemies Within Our Own Camp

THERE was other hostile propaganda which we encountered during the year and which we and you were forced to counteract. I shall not dwell long on the propaganda which the enemies within our own camp conducted, those Jews whose rallying point is the American Council for Judaism, but I would like to make this observation, purely for the record: there seems to be no fact however distorted, no document, however discredited, no writer on Palestine, however anti-Semitic, that this group will not stoop to use in their dishonest attack on the Zionist cause.

Take, for instance, their use of the King-Crane Report. This discredited report, made in 1919 after a hasty tour of Palestine and Syria, in an atmosphere which the members of the Commission themselves describe

as one permeated by propaganda and intrigue, was unearthed by the research workers of the American Council for Judaism's "Information Bulletin" and made their *piece de resistance*. No less a person than Lessing J. Rosenwald, President of the American Council for Judaism, found it necessary to enter this questionable document into the volume of hearings of the Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs. And what version would he use? Naturally the partial version printed in the late George Antonius' book, "The Arab Awakening," which leaves out the confidential portion of the document marked "For Americans Only," and which tells the story of intrigue that surrounded the work of the Commission.

And who was the author of the King-Crane report? Sir Ronald Storrs, hardly a friend of Zionism, states in his *Memoirs*: "Few that had the privilege of meeting Dr. King and of knowing the surviving Commissioner (Crane), will be disposed to doubt that though the hands that signed their report were the hands of King and Crane, the voice was the voice of Crane." And who was Charles R. Crane, to whom Antonius affectionately dedicates his book, as "aptly nicknamed

Harun Al-Rashid"; who, until his recent death, supplied funds for pro-Arab propaganda? Ambassador Dodd, in his *Diary*, tells something of his character when he describes him as "enthusiastic about the Hitler regime in Germany," and adds, "Jews are anathema to him and he hopes to see them put in their place. His advice to me was of course: 'Let Hitler have his way.'"

These are types of Jews we have to operate with on the American scene! . . .

The Battle Remains to Be Won

WE have made some significant progress during this past year. We have a right to a measure of congratulations on the work which has been done, and on the contribution which American Zionists have made to the progress of our movement. We have put our movement on the plane where it belongs, and where it will stay as a great international movement, deserving of the most earnest concern of the great powers of the earth. But it would be a mistake to assume, or to proceed on the assumption, that because of this progress, we can now rest on our oars; that decisions have already been made in the highest circles, that they are favorable decisions, that the battle days of our movement are over, or nearly over, and that we can safely demobilize soon and pass from the political struggle to purely economic considerations affecting Palestine.

This would be a colossal blunder for us to make. Our battle days are far from over. Our battle is far from won. We must bear in mind this simple fact: that actually no authoritative new policy has as yet been announced, nor is it known to any one of us. Our enemies are still busily at work in London, Cairo, Jerusalem, and Washington. We must remember, too, that final political decisions go through many stages and pass through many hands, and are frequently reversed at the last minute, before they are finally made public.

What is indicated for us for the coming days, is this:

** We must continue to insist, to advocate and to urge Palestine as the Jewish Commonwealth; no other formula, no other solution; no clever compromise! This is our demand. Is it just? Then insist on it!*

When we speak of Palestine as the Jewish Commonwealth we mean exactly what we say: The whole of Palestine, not a part of it nor a fraction of it.

There must be no relaxation of our political effort, no slowing up of our tempo, no partial demobilization,

until complete victory is attained.

We must build upon the broad and secure base of public sentiment, the approval of public opinion which in the final analysis determines the attitude and action of governments in democratic society.

With all my supreme admiration for the great personalities who are our friends, and for the significance of great personalities in the world crisis today, with my full admiration and full realization of these two facts, I still say, unto you, what the psalmist said long ago: "Al tivtechu bi-nedivim". — "Put not your trust in princes. . . ."

Put not the future of our movement in the sole keeping of individuals, however friendly, however great; appeal to the masses of the people of the world; talk to the whole of America; make friends everywhere; carry on an active educational propaganda in your circle, within the sphere of your influence, among your own friends. That will be reflected in the higher political circles. That will guide them. That will sustain them when they come to make important decisions which may involve America's participation in the ultimate solution of the Palestine problem.

And finally I should like to appeal for a measure of confidence and trust, and also a measure of discipline in our movement. A measure of trust and confidence in those who have assumed the great responsibility of doing that which you direct them to do, and a measure of discipline in our ranks. This is an emergency period, and an emergency period calls for discipline, for co-ordination, sometimes for the subordination of self and individual judgment to the collective judgment of the group which has the collective responsibility for the work. A measure of confidence, trust, discipline, and also a large measure of faith in our future. We shall win through these bloody years to triumph and to victory.