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B'nai Zion dinner, 1946.

ADDRESS OF DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER AT THE B'NAI ZION DINNER
MARCH 31, 1946

My good friends, when I came to this meeting, hours and hours ago I had an idea of what it was all about. I got confused a bit as the meeting went along, but I think that Dr. Goldstein in the early part of the meeting indicated what my role at this meeting would be. There were to be four people, signifying the four types of people - in the Zionist Movement. You have heard all of them. There was music, you ate the meal, the whole Hagaddah was told. My function at this moment is that of the affokomen. The Affakomen you know, you keep under the pillow for four or five hours, then at the end you bring him out - just at that time you open the doors ostensibly to let Elijah in, actually to give the people a chance to go home and the prayer connected with the opening of the door at that time is "shovocho moschu hagoyim," I suppose that is what I have to do at this moment.

I hope that I will be able to make this speech of mine this evening, I have been in bed for the last two days with a bit of laryngitis, I will do my best.

I want to thank the Order Bnai Zion for this beautiful tribute. It is a great Organization that is doing great things greatly. It has served our Movement so eminently over so many years. I am proud to receive this act of recognition at the hands of so worthy and illustrious an Organization in Jewish life in the United States.

I want to thank Mr. Daniel Frisch, the Toastmaster of the evening for all that he did to help make this such a fine success for the Jewish National Fund, and incidentally for me. I want to thank, deeply and most sincerely the men who have spoken here this evening, and for all the things that they have said, things which I did not deserve.

I know what my function is here at this occasion. I am in the nature of a decoy. It was through me that this handsome sum of money was raised for the Jewish National Fund. I have no illusions about this business of honoring me - I am glad that this effort was so successful, so much more successful than last year; I will now be able to give a few of my trees to Dr. Wise.

You know how it is when you call up a man to the Torah, to Shlissi, or to Mafter, you know what a "tachshid" he is, you don't do it because he is such an important person, but you know he will shnodir - that is what I am here for tonight, except that I didn't do the shnoddering - you did it for me.

The bestowal of kovid is not an essential by-product of Jewish leadership, as you know. Rather that old phrase of the Bible, "Od me at azkoli ni" is perhaps more accurately descriptive of the true situation with reference to leadership in Jewish life. I do not mean to imply that this holds true of the Zionist Movement, chas vecholilah, our Movement is beyond all reproach on this score, as the events of the last few years will testify.

I always wanted a Nachlah; its been a dream of mine, been a dream of every Zionist for that matter, and I am happy that the Bnai Zion, and Mendel Fisher have now capitalized on this dream of mine.

The rabbis say, "kol hamehal lach arba amot be Eretz Israel, muftach lo, she hu ben olam aba," a man who walks just four ells, four cubits, in the land of Israel, he may be assured of immortality. If that is true, how much more so is it true of a man who is privileged to have a Nachlah in Eretz Israel.

My good friends, I say this without any sermonics, he who has a stake in Eretz Israel has a stake in his people's future, and in his people's immortality. I was convinced more than I ever was when I visited Palestine

a few months ago; I was convinced of nothing so much as of the fact that there in Palestine was the future of our people. The country was almost straightly shut up like Jericho of old, so geres and sogereth, as if the wall of Jericho was built around the entire country to keep the Jews out. Navies were patrolling the waters off the shores of Palestine; the borders were patrolled to the north, to the east, to the south. There was a wall, an impenetrable wall around Palestine, and when you were in Palestine you could almost hear the galuth pounding upon the walls, trying to get in; the galuth was liquidating and all that was left of the galuth, and all that had any hope for the future, and was at all thinking of the future, was trying to break through this impenetrable wall to get into Palestine, because there they knew was the place of the future; there was the future.

Our there, beyond the walls, a thousand years and more of Jewish history was winding up in an epilogue of blood and terror and ruin. In Palestine, in this little encircled land was springtide, and resurrection. There was the future. Here all that was old was becoming new again and upon the churvoth olam, and the shoma mador vedor, upon waste and ruin, and ancient desolation, men were building new and beautifully promising things, homes, and schools and fruitful fields and orchards and shops and factories and commerce and industry. Here was the future, and here old lives were made new again, and languished spirits revived, and tired hearts rekindled, and the weary and battered bodies and spirits of the helpless of Europe found renewal here, and the song returned and the laughter, and the faith. No wonder that Dr. Theodor Herzl called this strange little land of the most startling contradictions, "Alt Neuland."

And I personally, I like to have a part in that future, that most exciting and adventurous future, and I therefore thank you, good friends, for this gracious act of yours which will be as a pool of light for me, which will make luminous all my future work, and all my future

years. And if when I am gone my name will be linked with a plot of ground in that land of my people's future, where free men will plow and sow and reap, and where little children perchance will sing, under the spacious blue skies of Eretz Israel, my spirit will bless you abundantly for having made it possible.

Reference was made this evening to my work in recent years, to my hard work in behalf of our Cause. Men frequently asked me how it was that I could travel so much and do travel so much in behalf of our Movement. I tell you friends, that travelling as far as our Cause is concerned at this time is part of building. I think of those who have travelled in the last few years, some of them five years, six years, seven years and more, along all the broken highways of Europe, through underground, from one concentration camp to another. I think of them on their road of sorrow, all of them travelling in the hope of reaching the shores of Palestine, and I want to be with them in their travels. I want to be within the rhythm of their impassioned pilgrimage. I claim a freehold in their destiny, and until they will have come el ha Milucha, ve el ha Nahala, until our people has reached rest and peace and security, no one of us can be at ease, no one of us should be at ease. This is the time of vely he benezoa Aaron - the ark is travelling to the Promised Land.

It is forty-two years this year since I joined my first Zionist Society, since I helped organize the first Junior Zionist Society in the United States. It was in the year that Theodor Herzl died in 1904; it was only a few months after the Kishinev Pogrom, forty-five Jews were killed in that pogrom, and the whole civilized world was shocked and aroused: forty-five Jews had been killed!

Some fifteen years later, in the wake of the First World War, thirty thousand Jews were murdered in the Ukraine, and four hundred Jewish communities were pogromized; the civilized world was no longer quite as shocked or aroused. The war to make the "world safe for democracy" was won, a League of Nations to ensure world peace was established; the Jews in Eastern and

Central Europe were granted equal rights, even special rights as a minority group, but they nevertheless continued to kill Jews, anti-Semitism grew and spread like a galloping cancer, in spite of constitutions and conventions, and international guarantees. Fascism and Nazism appeared. The Jew was blamed for Communism, and a vast anti-Semitic propaganda spread all over the world.

Some twenty years later, during the Second World War, six million Jews were put to death, and there really was no longer any civilized world sensitive enough to be shocked or aroused. We were now in an age of decaying sanctities. The world was so surfeited with its corpses and with the hurts and outrages of the generation of planned and consummated evil, that its very spirit was dulled and stupefied.

Now this disastrous line of decline in the fortune of our people, from the forty-seven killed in Kishinev in 1903, when I was a young boy, and joined my first Zionist Society, to the six million killed in 1940, this line traces for many of us also the ascending line of our intensive concentration on the Zionist solution. Our Zionism, the Zionism of the men of my generation is the product of forty years of Jewish experience which we witnessed with our own eyes, and in which we participated. Of course from our background, from our training as children, from the redolent memories of Bible and Prayer-book we derived a certain awareness, a certain aperception, but it was life itself which drove home the lesson; it was life itself which - as was the case with the Prophet Ezekial - it was life itself which put forth its hand and gave us the safer hamegillah, the roll of the book upon which was written, "kinim vehagit vahe," lamentation, and mourning, and woe, and we were commanded to eat what we found, to eat the roll, the safer hamegillah, and then go and speak to the House of Israel.

Now there were many during these catastrophic years who refused to eat, and to digest what they found; they turned away from these unpleasant

and stark realities of life, this frightful decline, this catabasis in Jewish fortune and all their clear implications, and sought escape in wishful thinking, in compensating daydreams: The Jewish problem would solve itself quite simply, they maintained, with the triumph of democracy, or internationalism, or socialism, or communism. In the meantime, however, the Jewish problem in Europe almost solved itself through the extermination of the Jews of Europe. The forces of history, as far as the Jews at least were concerned, were seemingly not content to wait until the Jewish doctrinaire could prove his point.

Last month in Vienna, refugee Jews were demonstrating through the streets of Vienna, carrying banners and placards demanding the right immediately to go to Palestine, and on many of these banners were inscribed those immortal words of Bialik, "Im yesh zedek, yo feya behad," If there is to be justice, let it appear now!

Had our people taken to heart what life was trying to teach them during these desperate years, and for that matter throughout the long weary years of our dispersion and our dependence, Palestine would today be a Jewish State, and millions now dead through Nazi mass slaughter would be alive today, and free in their own home.

My good people, we Zionists are not fanatics about our Zionism, we are just realists about Jewish life. That is all.

I have been denounced; you have been denounced; all my good friends here have been denounced as political nationalists, as if this term in any way connotes something fearful or evil. To be sure we are political nationalists, insofar as we seek for our people that which every other historic people possesses on the face of the earth, a national home and a national status, but, true to the great tradition of our people, we know other frontiers beyond the bourne of state and nation. It was in fact our own nation, when it was a nation in Palestine, which first des-

cribed these other and further frontiers, the frontiers of akarith hayamim, of yom shekuloth shabat hu melucha..... It was our people who first directed man's glance toward them, but unfortunately for us, we have not yet reached even our first frontier, our own settled peaceful home as a people, we are still the hunted nomads of the wilderness.

It is said, and some scientists, some archeologists have said of the plow that it was first invented in Palestine, but so also was the vision of beating the sword into a plow, that too was invented in Palestine, by our people, and many other great visions our people gave to mankind: justice, and brotherhood, and peace, and the concept of the dignity of human life, and the rachamonuth, but like Prometheus who was riven to the rocks and tormented for having brought the gift of fire to mankind, we helped mankind, but could not help ourselves.

Now the time has come, finally the time has come, urgently the time has come for us to help ourselves. We need a home. That is the cry that rises above all others that I can hear from Belsen, from Dachau, and Oswietz, from the hearts of our fellow-Jews who are not spoken of as displaced persons. They are displaced persons only because we are displaced people, and that is the root of their tragedy, and of the six million who perished, and of all the tragedies in the long centuries of our national homelessness. We are a displaced people; we need a home. That is the motor power which drives these pursued and hunted ships of our extra-legal and more than legal immigrants who are seeking the shores of Palestine with a desperate longing unknown in all the annals of nation-building.

I am proud that three of these ships reached the shores of Palestine within one week. For shame, for shame, that the ships of the proudest navy on earth should be employed to intercept the ships which are carrying to sanctuary the saddest and the most deserving home-seekers

on earth. Rather should the ships of Great Britain be carrying these Jews to Palestine for Great Britain in the sight of the whole world undertook to facilitate Jewish immigration into Palestine, and for that matter, good friends the ships of the United States might well be carrying these refugees to Palestine. The ships of the United States which carried a quarter of a million Nazi prisoners to these shores for temporary dwelling might just as well have carried a quarter million Jews who were doomed in the gas chambers of the Nazis.

We applaud now. Why didn't you demand it of your Government four years ago, five years ago, six years ago? Why were you satisfied with that miserable thing called Oswego? - and you applauded it.

A quarter of a century ago Great Britain, the United States, and fifty other nations of the world, recognized this need of the Jewish people for a home, hence the Balfour Declaration; hence the Palestine Mandate. We waited for that recognition for 1900 years, and we set about building our home under very difficult conditions, and very difficult times for at that time, in 1920-21, European Jewry had been ravaged and impoverished by years of war, Russian Jewry was completely isolated, but the idealism and the goodwill, as well as the political motivations which were responsible for the Balfour Declaration did not carry far beyond the close of the war, and then obstacles, one more formidable than the other were set up in our way and the Mandatory Government seemed to be determined to delay, to constrict, and finally completely to frustrate the building of the Jewish National Home. So that when the most terrible moment in our history arrived and Palestine might have served as a place of escape for the millions doomed to wholesale slaughter in the Nazi gas chambers, ~~the~~ its doors were practically shut, and they are still shut, and now a Committee of Enquiry, the seventeenth of its kind, each one in turn devised to circumvent the clear intent and purpose of the Mandate is now ponderously

at work to determine what has already been determined, to ascertain what has already been ascertained, and to recommend what? Certainly not the fulfillment in letter and spirit of the Balfour Declaration and of the Mandate, because if that were the objective of the Governments which created the Committee, they need never have created that committee. The Governments would have acted and could have acted speedily and forthrightly as they had pledged themselves to, time and again. The Labor Government of Great Britain, through numerous resolutions of the Labor Party, and our own Administration through its Party Platform - what need was there for a Committee of Inquiry? Unless its purpose was delay, and the recommendation of a formula which will give the Jewish people far far less than was internationally granted to them after the last war.

Bevin stated what this formula should be. It was not to contain the establishment of a Jewish State, and in a sense President Truman also indicated what this formula is to be. I do not know what the report will be, but of one thing I am certain, that the Jewish people, inside and outside of Palestine will not agree because it cannot agree to any proposal which will rob them of their historic right, and of their historic hope to rebuild themselves as a nation in the national home of Israel.

Of one thing I am certain, that they will not agree, because they cannot agree to any proposal which will restrict on political grounds Jewish immigration into Palestine or deny the right of sanctuary to any homeless Jew.

(5) I need not refer to, it has already been mentioned very dramatically here this evening: that Jews were shot and beaten by German police in the American Zone of occupation, the same Nazis only this time using American weapons and under American supervision.

My good friends, here is the scroll - the sefer hamegillah, and we must eat it. There is no way out of it. The triumph of freedom in the Second World War has no more liquidated anti-Semitism and made the position of the Jew secure than the triumph of democracy in the First World War, or the triumph of enlightenment and emancipation in the 19th Century. The League of Nations did little for us, nor will the UNO do more, unless the Jewish people is granted national status and permitted to take its rightful place among the United Nations. UNO is composed of representatives of nations, of states, we are on the outside, although the Palestine Mandate speaks of a Jewish National Home, the Jewish National Home of Palestine has not yet been given national status, and is not represented in the UNO, and we are still feeding on the crumbs of alien tables.

It is really to the highest interests of Great Britain, I ask, and of the United States, to keep us out? To deny this ancient people that has served mankind not unworthily through these centuries, a people that has suffered so much? It is really to the highest interest of Great Britain and the United States to deny this people the opportunity which is not denied even to the smallest and the most recent of peoples on earth? To deny it the right of national status and a national home? Because there is no other way out, good friends, We must press forward at all costs, and with unrelenting determination, and we Jews of the United States must demand of our own Government that it reflect the true sentiment of the American People as twice expressed by the Congress of the United States; as expressed on innumerable times by state legislation and governors of the states; we must demand of our administration that it reflect that pro-Palestine, pro-Zionist sentiment of the American people and translate it into action. We

I close, my good friends, with this thought: there is a terrific inevitability about this thing we are engaged in, an inescapability. There is no other way out for our people.

Within this week - this week - a year after the great triumph of the United Nations over Nazism and Fascism I read in the papers, and you read in the papers the following items, all within less than a week:

(1) "Plans for combatting anti-Semitism in Hungary formed the major topic of discussion at a conference of the Jewish National Committee, which concluded today at Jeded. Speakers pointed out that pro-Nazi elements in the country are continuing to incite sections of the Hungarian population against Jews and to spread anti-Semitic propaganda.

(2) "General Donovan warned that the legacy of anti-Semitism left by the Nazis may destroy the Jews in Europe. The poison of anti-Semitism which the Nazis employed as a major weapon in the war against democracy now bars the way for the rehabilitation of the surviving Jews in Europe and makes imperative their emigration to other lands, chiefly Palestine."

This is not a Zionist speaking or a Jew, this is the head of a Department of the American Government that had the most direct and the most accurate sources of information about all that is transpiring in Europe.

"It is clearly impossible for the Jews to remain in Europe, he said, anti-Semitism is too strong. Defeat and demoralization have intensified it. The Jews know well that laws and enactments will not correct it; they must move."

This is the second item.

The third item: "The Board of Deputies of British Jews met at a meeting last night in London discussed the growth of anti-Semitism in England and measures to combat it."

(4) "A mass meeting of 600 Jews today protested the anti-Semitic riots which broke out here Sunday during a soccer match between the Hakoach and the Police Association team in Vienna."

"They laughed them to scorn, and despised them. 'What can these feeble Jews do?' (I am quoting now the text of the Bible) and Sanballot, 'Will they revive the stones out of the heap of rubbish?' And Tobias the Ammonite, (who had no business there in the first place, any more than Ibn Saud has business there now) expressed the thought that even that which they will build, these Jews, these feeble Jews, if a fox go up, he will break down the stone wall."

But Nehemiah went on with the building, and to the leaders of the Arab League of his day he said, "Lechem ain cheleku zdokah ve zichoron be Yerushalaim", you have neither a portion nor any right, nor any memories in this land. You don't belong here!

And when these enemies saw that the rebuilding went forward anyhow, and the breaches began to be stopped, they conspired to come and fight, I quote the text, "They conspired to come and fight against Jerusalem, and lay the walls. Then Nehemiah organized his hagannah - this is the text - "...and it came to pass from that time forward that half of my young men carried on with the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows and the coats of mail; every one with one hand carried on with his work and with the other held his weapon."

That is the way Jerusalem was rebuilt after the first Exile; that is the way Jerusalem will be rebuilt after the second Exile!

I am not through with Nehemiah's Diary. It was only after the work was finally finished and a strong wall was built, that Sanballot and his friends decided to invite Nehemiah to a round table, and four or five times, says the Bible, they invited him, and even offered him assistance. They were ready to negotiate, they were ready to negotiate - after the wall was built. And I suggest, good friends, that history will repeat itself in connection with our Second Restoration, provided we remain true to the spirit of the lion-hearted Nehemiah and when we hear the challenge which was his challenge to the people of his day, "Lechu ve nifneh" "Come and let us build", we respond as the Jews of his day responded, "Nakum, ve nifneh", "Let us get up and build!"

The essential hope of our people which expressed itself not only in political Zionism but in the continuing messianic hope of our people through two thousand years is national restoration, the nation status of a free people among the free peoples of the earth, and that hope cannot be surrendered, no generation of Jews can or will surrender it, and nobody in Israel and no leader in Israel is authorized or can be authorized to surrender it.

A substitute solution may be forced upon us. Throughout our history substitute solutions were forced upon us, but we will resist wherever resistance is warranted, and to the degree that it is warranted we will resist. We may be betrayed, we will not be conquered!

Anybody who has any doubt about it simply does not understand the genius of the Jewish people. Here believe me, I do not speak sermonics or in any homelitical sense, I speak realistically. Anybody who has any doubt about the matter how the Jewish people will react to the emergencies of the hour, I would recommend to them, friends and foes alike, to read a page of our history - one page, found in the Bible, and connected with the First Restoration of our people, after the Babylonian Exile. It is as fresh I assure you and as revealing today as it was 2500 years ago, when Nehemiah wrote it down in his diary.

The walls of Jerusalem had to be rebuilt - please note - the exiles who had returned lived precariously in the midst of other peoples, in Judea, and these other peoples who lived in Judea were determined to keep the Jews few, and to keep them weak, and the national rights and power of the Jewish people had to be re-established and re-affirmed, and the symbol of that was the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, which had been razed when the people were exiled, and at once all the other peoples who lived in Palestine and around Palestine formed what we would call today, an Arab League; Sanballot, the Samaritan, Tobias the Ammonite, Gesham, the Arabian, were grieved - I am using the text now - when they heard that there was come a man, Nehemiah to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel." It grieved them, and at first when the Jews began to build, I quote,

*Note: The phrase was first uttered in Latin by the speaker.

demand a new deal in our State Department and while we Jews are lavish with our criticism of the Colonial Office, and justly so, let us bear in mind that our State Department has been as little cooperative with us as the Colonial Office in London and for less valid reasons, because our country does not have those involved and complicated imperial interests in the Middle East that Great Britain has. The Jews of the United States, if they want to build and are earnest about this building, and understand that there is no way out for our people, and that this is the time, the critical time, the hour of decision, the Jews of the United States must turn to their ~~new~~ chief executive, to the President of the United States, to President Truman, and demand of him to fulfill his own party's pledge.

We have moral power, because our Cause is a great moral Cause, and we have political power, if we would once learn how to use it, and not fritter it away, and it is not un-American to use that political power which you possess in urging upon your Government to fulfill pledges made by our country and to give expression to the will of the American people as represented in resolutions passed overwhelmingly by the Congress of the United States.

In my judgment it is the very height of Americanism for the Jews of America to band together as a solid force and go to their duly elected representatives and to the Executive Branch of our government and say: America had a hand in the framing of the Balfour Declaration; America has a convention which granted it rights and by which it assumed obligation toward Palestine. The American people has over the years voiced an attitude of deepest sympathy toward the Zionist Movement; we demand in the name of the democratic government which should represent the spirit of the people, we demand that in this hour of decision the weight of our Government be put squarely behind the Zionist Program of Today.

My friends, it is the essence of democratic technique and procedure to reward your friends and to punish your foes; to repudiate peoples and administrations which fail to live up to their own party commitments, and to their own pledges. I have been accused - this is my last word because I speak with such

strong conviction about this thing I have been accused of being politically partisan, of favoring one political party as against another. I want the Zionists of America to know - as far as all the others are concerned, that bothers me very little - I want the Zionists of America to know that I belong to no Party; that I serve the interests of no political party. I try to fulfill my duties as an American citizen to the best of my ability. I believe I have tried to live the life of a helpful, cooperative American citizen. Beyond that I have no parties; I have no allegiances, I have no interests other than the salvation of my people and I will go to any party or to any public official or to any government and I will knock on any door in the world, crying: help my people, my people need your help!

I want to be true to the spirit of Nehemiah, to the spirit of Herzl. They have shown the way for all of us. They and giants like them who have given survival to our people and immortality, and it is in their spirit, and under the impact of their vision and their prophecy that we, the children of this generation tried as we have been, yet placed at the crossroads of destiny, that we pledge ourselves to carry on until their dream and our dream and the dream of immortal Israel is finally fulfilled; until Israel is re-established as a free and happy people in its own land.

God grant that the consummation thereof be not long delayed. I thank you.

- 6] Reached another turning point - Mark Twain -
- On eve of great decisions - Corn. of Inquiry
- I do not know - Opposed - Immigrants
- Glad. Not the solutions! J. State!
- Majority - not this way - Secularists -
- Problem = Nat. Homesteaders - N/2 -
- Hess - Pivster - Hergl - Badger - 52 -
- Lord Rothschild - Pres. of 2. Federation

"I have much pleasure in conveying
to you, on behalf, His Majesty's Govt.
the following declaration of sympathy
with Jewish aspirations which has been
unanimously adopted, and approved by the Cabinet."

"His Majesty's Govt view with favor the established
movement in Pal. for a national home for the
J. people, and will use their best endeavors
to facilitate the achievement, the object of
Chamberlain - Wodrow Wilson - Lord Govt

- 7] as yet there is no J. Nat. Home -
If there were - free no migration

5. People must possess the ~~most~~ power (3)

If ^{you} remain in Arab Maj - a hard -

Even if allowed another 100,000 - Meaning

8. Talk to migrants! Truman!

For voters - persuaded -

Problem not 100,000 - A million!

Problem - a Secure Nat. Home

Nat. Status - a Vac -

Normalizing of life

9. America - has understands it.

Congress - 2 2 2 -

Truman: "We favor the opening, P. to
unrestricted of immigration and such a
policy as to result in the estab. then of
a free & demor. of Commonwealth"

Wisconsin -

Make our public opinion count -

Demand of our part.

10/ 2, m. solution inevitable - 80 70

A small offus. prop - 'firmness' the
mosaic persuasion - Am. flag - Bible
No highway - Beant defeat.

11/ Mobilize - cannot be sacrificed
to the Imperial - 6 d

Arab League - Troops

① ~~Do~~ Cannot permit Pan-Arabism

② We wish them well -

At Destiny's Crossroads

By DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

President, Zionist Organization of America

THIS IMPRESSIVE tribute which has been presented to me in the form of a land tract in Palestine, which is to be redeemed by the Jewish National Fund and to bear the name "Nachlath Silver," has touched me greatly. I am grateful to the Order Bnai Zion, a great organization which has served our movement so eminently for so long a time, for making available the resources to redeem this land tract and I am proud to receive this recognition at its hands.

The Rabbis say "*Kol ha'mehalech arba amot be Eretz Israel muvtach lo she'hu ben olam ha'ba*," a man who walks the distance of four ells in the Land of Israel is assured of immortality. How much more so is it true of a man who is privileged to have his name attached to a *nachlah*, an area of land redeemed as the property of our people, in Eretz Israel? He who has a stake in the soil of Jewish Palestine has a stake in his people's future, in his people's survival.

My conviction that the future of the Jewish people is inexorably linked with the upbuilding of Palestine became deeper during my visit to Eretz Israel several months ago. Like Jericho of old, the country was surrounded by a forbidding wall, almost straightly shut up to keep the Jews out. Worships of His Britannic Majesty's Navy were cruising off the shores of Palestine. Its land borders to the north, to the south, to the east, were equally patrolled and guarded by the British Army.

An impenetrable wall surrounded Palestine. One could almost hear the pounding upon this wall by those who were trying to enter. The Galuth was liquidating. All that was left of Jewish life in Europe, all that had any hope for the future, was trying to break through this impenetrable wall. They were trying to break through because they knew that *there* was the future.

Beyond the wall, a thousand years and more of Jewish history was winding up in an epilogue of blood, terror and ruin. In Palestine, in this little encircled land, was springtide and resurrection. Here all that was old was becoming new again. Upon the ancient desolation, upon waste and ruin, men were building new and beautifully promising things, homes, schools, fruitful fields, orchards, shops and factories; agriculture, commerce and industry. Here old lives were made new again, languished spirits revived, tired hearts invigorated. The weary bodies and battered spirits of the helpless of Europe found renewal here. Faith, song and laughter were returning. No wonder that Theodor Herzl called this land of the most startling contrasts, "*Alt-Neuland*" — *the New-Old Land*.

I, personally, wish to have a part in this future, in this most exciting and adventurous future. I appreciate,

therefore, very much this gracious act which will make luminous all my future work, all my future years. And if when I am gone my name will be linked with a plot of ground in that land of my people's future, where free men will plow and sow and reap, and where little children will sing, under the spacious blue skies of Eretz Israel, my spirit will bless you for having made it possible.

Reference was made to my work in recent years in behalf of our Cause. Men frequently ask me how it was that I could travel so much—and do travel so much—in behalf of our Movement. My answer is that travelling for our Cause at this time is part of building. I think of those who have travelled in recent years—some of them five, six, seven years and more—along all the broken highways of Europe, from one concentration camp to another. I think of them who travel on their road of sorrow in the hope of reaching the shores of Palestine, and I want to be with them. I want to be within the rhythm of their impassioned Pilgrimage. I claim a freehold in their destiny, and until they will have come *El Ha'menucha*, *Ve'el Ha'nachla*, until our people has reached peace and security, no one of us can be at ease, no one of us should be at ease. This is the time of *Vayehi Binsoa Ha'aron*, — when the Ark is travelling to the Promised Land. . . .

It is forty-two years this year since I helped organize the first Junior Zionist Society in the United States. It was in the year that Theodor Herzl died, in 1904; it was only a few months after the Kishinev Pogrom. Forty-five Jews were killed in that pogrom. The whole civilized world was shocked and aroused: forty-five Jews had been killed! Some fifteen years later, in the wake of the First World War, thirty thousand Jews were murdered in the Ukraine, and four hundred Jewish communities were pogromized. The civilized world was no longer quite as shocked. The war to make the "world safe for democracy" was won; a League of Nations to ensure world peace was established; the Jews in Eastern and Central Europe were granted equal rights, even special rights as a minority group, but they nevertheless *Continued to Kill Jews*. Anti-Semitism grew and spread like a galloping cancer, in spite of International Guarantees, Constitutions and Conventions, Fascism and Nazism appeared. The Jew was blamed for communism, and a vast anti-Semitic propaganda spread all over the world.

Some twenty years later, during the Second World War, SIX MILLION JEWS were put to death. But there really was no longer any civilized world sensitive enough to be *SHOCKED OR AROUSED*. We were now in an age of decaying sanctities. The world was so surfeited with its corpses and with the outrages of a generation of

planned and consummated evil, that its spirit was dulled and stupified.

This disastrous line of decline in the fortune of our people,—from the forty-seven dead in Kishinev in 1903 to the six million killed in 1942 and 1943—traces, for many of us, also the ascending line of our intensive concentration on the Zionist solution. Our Zionism, the Zionism of the men of my generation, is the product of forty years of Jewish experience which we witnessed with our own eyes, and in which we participated. Of course, from our background, from the redolent memories of Bible and Prayerbook, we derived a certain awareness, a certain apperception, but it was life itself which drove home the lesson; it was life itself—as was the case with the Prophet Ezekiel—which put forth its hand and gave us the *SEFER HA'MEGILLAH*, the Roll of the Book, upon which were written, "*Kinim, V'hege, V'hi*," Lamentation, Mourning and Woe, and we were commanded to eat what we found, to "eat the roll," the *Sefer Ha'Megillah*, and then go and speak to the House of Israel! . . .

There were many during those catastrophic years who refused to eat and to digest what they found. They turned away from these unpleasant and stark realities of life, from this frightful decline and all its clear implications, and sought escape in wishful thinking, in compensating daydreams. The Jewish problems, they maintained, would solve itself quite simply, with the triumph of democracy, or internationalism, or socialism, or communism. In the meantime, however, the Jewish problem in Europe almost solved itself through the extermination of the Jews of Europe. The forces of history, as far as the Jews at least were concerned, were seemingly not content to wait until the Jewish doctrinaire could prove his point. Last month refugee Jews were demonstrating through the streets of Vienna carrying banners demanding the right to go to Palestine immediately. On many of these banners were inscribed those immortal words of Bialik, "*Im Yesh Zedek, Yofiya Miyad*"—if there is to be justice, let it appear now!

Had our people taken to heart what life was trying to teach us during those desperate years, and for that matter throughout the long weary years of our dispersion and our dependence, Palestine would today be a Jewish State. Millions now dead through Nazi mass slaughter would be alive today, and free in their own home. We, Zionists, are not fanatics about our Zionism. We are just realists about Jewish life. I have been denounced, and all my good friends have been denounced, as "political nationalists," as if this term is any way connotes something fearful or evil. To be sure, we are political nationalists, insofar as we seek for our people that which every other historic people on the face of the earth possesses; a national home, a national status. But, true to the great tradition of our people, we also know other frontiers beyond those of state and nation. It was, in fact, our people, when it was a nation in Palestine, which first desecrated these other frontiers, the frontiers of "*Acharith Ha'yamin*," of the great vision of the Messianic Age, of Brotherhood, of Peace and of Goodness. It was our

people which first directed man's glance toward those frontiers, but, unfortunately, we ourselves have not yet reached even our first frontier—our own settled, peaceful home as a people. We are still the hunted nomads of the world. Some archaeologists have said that the plow was first *Invented* in Palestine. The vision of "beating the sword into a plow" was also invented in Palestine, and by our people. Our people gave to mankind many great visions: Justice, Brotherhood, Peace, the concepts of the Dignity of Human Life, and of *Rachlmanuth* (Compassion). But like Prometheus, who was tormented for having brought the gift of fire to mankind, we helped mankind, but could not help ourselves.

The time has come now, urgently the time has come, for us to help ourselves! We need a Home. That is the cry that rises above all others from Belsen, from Dachau, from Oswiecim, from the hearts of our fellow-Jews, whom men now call Displaced Persons. They are displaced persons only because we are a Displaced People! That is the root of their tragedy, and of the six million who perished, and of all the tragedies in the long centuries of our national homelessness. We are a Displaced People, and we need a home. That is the motor power which drives those pursued and hunted ships of our extra-legal, and more than legal, immigrants who are seeking the shores of Palestine with a desperate longing unknown in all the annals of nation-building.

I am proud that three of these ships reached the shores of Palestine this week. For shame, that the ships of the proudest Navy on earth should be employed to intercept the ships which are carrying to sanctuary the saddest and one in turn devised to circumvent the clear intent and purpose of the Mandate—is now at work to determine what has already been determined, to ascertain what has already been ascertained and to recommend—what? Certainly not the fulfillment, in letter and spirit, of the Balfour Declaration and of the Mandate! If that were the objective of the Governments which created the Committee, they need never have created that committee. The Governments would have acted—speedily and forthrightly—as they had pledged themselves to, time and again; the Labor Government of Great Britain, through numerous resolutions of the Labor Party, and our Administration through its Party Platform! What need was there for a Committee of Inquiry? Unless its purpose was delay, and the recommendation of a formula which will give the Jewish people FAR, FAR LESS than was internationally guaranteed to them after the last war

Bevin stated what this formula should be. It was not to contain the establishment of a Jewish State. In a certain sense, President Truman, too, indicated what this formula is to be. I do not know what the Committee's report will be, but of one thing I am certain: the Jewish people, inside and outside of Palestine, will not agree, because it cannot agree, to any proposal which will rob them of their historic right, and of their historic hope, to rebuild themselves as a nation in the national home of Israel. Of one thing I am certain: They will not agree, because they cannot agree, to any proposal which will re-

strict, on political grounds Jewish immigration into Palestine or deny the right of Sanctuary to any homeless Jews.

Our people's essential hope which expressed itself not only in Political Zionism but in the continuing Messianic Hope through two thousand years is *National Restoration*: the national status of a free people among the free peoples of the earth. That hope cannot be surrendered. No generation of Jews can or will surrender it. Nobody in Israel is authorized or can be authorized to surrender it. A substitute solution may be forced upon us; substitute solutions were forced upon us throughout our history. But we will resist wherever resistance is warranted, and to the degree that it is warranted. "We may be betrayed; we will not be conquered!"

Anybody who has any doubt about it simply does not understand the genius of the Jewish people. To anyone, friend and foe alike, who has any doubt about how the Jewish people will react to the emergencies of the hour, I would recommend reading a page of our history—one page in the Bible which describes the First Restoration after the Babylonian Exile. It is as fresh and as revealing today as it was 2500 years ago, when Nehemiah wrote it down in his Diary.

The walls of Jerusalem had to be rebuilt. The exiles who had returned lived precariously in the midst of other peoples in Judea. These other peoples were determined to keep the Jews few and weak. The national rights and power of the Jewish people had to be re-established and re-affirmed. The symbol of that was the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem which had been razed. At once, all the other peoples who lived in and around Palestine formed what we would call today, an Arab League: "Sanballat the Samaritan, Tobias the Ammonite, Geshem the Arabian," were grieved—I am quoting the text now—when "they heard that there was come a man, Nehemiah, to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel." It grieved them. When the Jews began to build, they laughed them to scorn, and despised them. "What can these feeble Jews do?", said Sanballat, "Will they revive the stones out of the heap of rubbish?" And Tobias the Ammonite, (who had no business there in the first place, any more than Ibn Saud has business there now) expressed the thought that even that which they, these feeble Jews, will build, "If a fox go up, he will break down the stone wall." But Nehemiah went on with the building, and to the leaders of the Arab League of his day he said, "*Lachem ain chelek u'zidakah v'zichoron be Yerushalaim*,"—you have neither a portion nor any right, nor any memories in this land. You do not belong here!

When these enemies saw that the rebuilding went forward anyhow, and the breaches began to be stopped, "they conspired to come and fight against Jerusalem, and lay it waste." Then Nehemiah organized his *Haganah*. "And it came to pass from that time forward that half of my young men carried on with the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows and the coats of mail; every one with one hand carried on with his work and with the other held his weapon." That is the way Jerusalem was rebuilt after the first

Exile. That is the way Jerusalem will be rebuilt after the second Exile!

It was only after the work was finally finished and a strong wall was built, that Sanballat and his friends decided to invite Nehemiah to a Roundtable. . . . Four or five times, declares the Bible, they invited him, and even offered him assistance. They were ready to negotiate after the Wall was built. History will repeat itself in connection with our Second Restoration, provided we remain true to the spirit of the lion-hearted Nehemiah, and when we hear the challenge which was his challenge to the people of his day, "*Lechu Ve Nivneh*." Come and let us build, we shall respond as the Jews of his day responded: "*Nakum Ve Nivneh*." Let us get up and build!

There is a stern inevitability about this thing we are engaged in. This week—a year after the great triumph of the United Nations over Nazism and Fascism—I read in the papers the following items:

- (1) "Plans for combatting anti-Semitism in Hungary formed the major topic of discussions at a conference of the Jewish National Committee, which concluded today at Szeget. Speakers pointed out that pro-Nazi elements in the country are continuing to incite sections of the Hungarian population against Jews and to spread anti-Semitic propaganda.
- (2) "General Donovan warned that the legacy of anti-Semitism left by the Nazis may destroy the Jews in Europe. The poison of Anti-Semitism, which the Nazis employed as a major weapon in the war against democracy, now bars the way to the rehabilitation of the surviving Jews in Europe and makes imperative this emigration to other lands, chiefly Palestine."

This is not a Zionist or a Jew speaking. This is the head of a Department of the American Government which has the most accurate sources of information about all that is transpiring in Europe.

"It is clearly impossible for the Jews to remain in Europe," he said, "anti-Semitism is too strong. Defeat and demoralization have intensified it. The Jews know well that laws and enactments will not correct it; they must move."

- (3) "The Board of Deputies of British Jews at a meeting last night in London discussed the growth of anti-Semitism in England and measures to combat it."
- (4) "A mass meeting of 600 Jews today protested against anti-Semitic riots which broke out here Sunday during a soccer match between the Hakoach and the Police Association team in Vienna."

I need not refer to the fact which has already been mentioned, that Jews were shot and beaten by German police in the U. S. Zone of Occupation in Germany. The same Nazis only this time using American weapons and under American supervision. . .

Here is the Scroll—the *Sefer Hamegillah*—we must *Eat It*. There is no way out of it. The triumph of freedom in the Second World War has no more liquidated anti-Semitism and made the position of the Jew secure than

the triumph of democracy in the First World War, or the triumph of enlightenment and emancipation in the 19th Century. The League of Nations did little for us, nor will the UNO do more, unless the Jewish people is granted national status and permitted to take its rightful place among the United Nations. UNO is composed of representatives of Nations; we are on the outside. Although the Palestine Mandate speaks of a Jewish National Home, the Jewish National Home of Palestine has not yet been given national status, and is not represented in the UNO. We are still feeding on the crumbs from off alien tables.

I ask: is it really in the highest interests of Great Britain, and of the United States, to keep us out? to deny this ancient people that has served mankind not unworthily through these centuries, a people that has suffered so much, the opportunity which is not denied even to the smallest and the most recent of peoples on earth? to deny it the right of national status and a National Home?

Because there is no other way out for us, we must press forward with unrelenting determination. We, Jews of the United States, must demand of our own Government that it reflect the true sentiment of the American people as it was twice expressed by the Congress of the United States; and innumerable times by States Legislatures and Governors of States. We must demand of our Administration that it reflect that pro-Palestine, pro-Zionist sentiment of the American people and to translate it into action. We demand a new deal in our State Department. While we are lavish with our criticism of the British Colonial Office, and justly so, let us bear in mind that our State Department has been as little cooperative with us as the Colonial Office in London and for less valid reasons, because our country does not have those complicated imperial interests in the Middle East that Great Britain has. The Jews of the United States, if they want to build and are earnest about this building, and understand that there is no other way out for our people, and that this is the hour of decision, must turn to their Chief Executive, to the President of the United States, to President Truman, and demand of him to fulfill his own Party's pledge.

We have moral power. Our Cause is a great moral Cause. We have political power, if we would once learn how to use it, and not fritter it away. It is not un-American to use the political power which one possesses in urging upon his Government to fulfill pledges made by our country and to give expression to the will of the American people as represented in Resolutions passed overwhelmingly by the Congress of the United States.

In my judgment, it is real Americanism for the Jews of America to band together as a strong force and go to their duly elected representatives and to the Executive Branch of our government and say: America had a hand in the framing of the Balfour Declaration; America has a Convention with England which granted it rights and by which it assumed obligations toward Palestine. The American people has, over the years, voiced as attitude of deepest sympathy toward the Zionist Movement. We demand of the Government which should represent the

spirit of the people, that in this hour of decision the weight of our Government should be put squarely behind the Zionist program.

It is the essence of democratic technique and procedure to reward your friends and to punish your foes; to repudiate people and administrations which fail to live up to their own party commitments, and to their own pledges. Because I speak with such strong conviction about the matter I have been accused of being a political partisan; of favoring one political party as against another. I want the Zionists of America to know that I belong to no Party; that I serve the interests of no political party. I try to fulfill my duties as an American citizen to the best of my ability. I believe I have tried to live the life of a loyal cooperative American citizen. Beyond that I have no other interests than the salvation of my people and I will go to any party or to any public official or to any government and I will knock on any door in the world, crying: help my people; my people needs your help!

I want to be true to the spirit of Nehemiah, to the spirit of Herzl. They have shown the way for all of us. They, and giants like them, gave our people the secret of survival and immortality. It is in their spirit, and under the impact of their vision, that we, the children of this generation, placed at the crossroads of destiny, pledge ourselves to carry on until their dream, which is the dream of Israel, is finally fulfilled—until Israel is re-established as a free and happy people in its own land.

BNAI ZION EXECUTIVE BOARD ADMITS THREE NEW CAMPS

Two new Camps, composed exclusively of war veterans, were granted charters at a meeting of the Executive Board of Bnai Zion held at the Hotel Governor Clinton on April 25th. One of the Veterans Camps took the name of Hatikvah Camp No. 88. Appearing for it were Phillip Redelheim and Saul Small. The second Veterans Camp has been assigned No. 18, but has as yet taken no name. Appearing for it before the Executive Board were the following veterans: Alfred Burger, Jack Cohen and Jack Beckerman.

A. A. Redelheim, Sgan Rishon of Bnai Zion, in sponsoring the applications said that thousands of the Jewish war veterans were returning to civilian life, definitely strengthened in their Jewish consciousness and evincing a marked response to Zionism as a result of what they had seen in Europe. They had shed all illusions, said Mr. Redelheim, and constitute a reservoir from which Zionism could draw militant supporters of the Jewish homeland.

In addition to the two new Veterans Camps, "young blood" was also added to the organization by the admission of a youth group, composed of boys and girls, called the Star of David Camp No. 130. Miss Nacmi Bender, who has played a leading part in the organization of the Youth Camp appeared before the Board to present the petition. This new youth group which shows the promise of great activity bids fair to be the first of a number of similar groups to be added in the near future.

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**In Its Struggle For Survival, Through The
Upbuilding Of Eretz Israel, The Jewish
People Must Realize That Today It Stands**

At Destiny's Crossroads*



By Dr. Abba Hillel Silver
President, Zionist Organization of America

THIS impressive tribute which has been presented to me in the form of a land tract in Palestine, which is to be redeemed by the Jewish National Fund and is to bear the name "Nachlath Silver," has touched me greatly. I am grateful to the Order Bnai Zion, a great organization which has served our movement so eminently for so long a time, for making available the resources to redeem this land tract and I am proud to receive this recognition at its hands.

The Rabbis say, "*Kol ha'mehalech arba amot be Eretz Israel muvtach lo she'hu ben olam ha'ba*," a man who walks the distance of four ells in the Land of Israel is assured of immortality. How much more so is it true of a man who is privileged to have his name attached to a

nachlah, an area of land redeemed as the property of our people, in Eretz Israel? He who has a stake in the soil of Jewish Palestine has a stake in his people's future, in his people's survival.

My conviction that the future of the Jewish people is inexorably linked with the upbuilding of Palestine became deeper during my visit to Eretz Israel several months ago. Like Jericho of old, the country was surrounded by a forbidding wall, almost straightly shut up to keep the Jews out. Warships of His Britannic Majesty's Navy were cruising off the shores of Palestine. Its land borders to the north, to the south, to the east, were equally patrolled and guarded by the British Army.

An impenetrable wall surrounded Palestine. One could almost hear the pounding upon this wall by those who were trying to enter. The Galuth was liquidating. All that

* Excerpt from an address delivered at the "Nachlath Silver" Banquet of Bnai Zion, March 31, Hotel Commodore, New York.

was left of Jewish life in Europe, all that had any hope for the future, was trying to break through this impenetrable wall. They were trying to break through because they know that *there* was the future.

Beyond the wall, a thousand years and more of Jewish history was winding up in an epilogue of blood, terror and ruin. In Palestine, in this little encircled land, was springtide, and resurrection. Here all that was old was becoming new again. Upon the ancient desolation, upon waste and ruin, men were building new and beautifully promising things, homes, schools, fruitful fields, orchards, shops and factories; agriculture, commerce and industry. Here old lives were made new again, languished spirits revived, tired hearts invigorated. The weary bodies and battered spirits of the helpless of Europe found renewal here. Faith, song and laughter were returning. No wonder that Theodore Herzl called this land of the most startling contrasts, "*Alt-Neuland*"—the New-Old Land.

I, personally, wish to have a part in this future, in this most exciting and adventurous future. I appreciate, therefore, very much this gracious act which will make luminous all my future work, all my future years. And if when I am gone my name will be linked with a plot of ground in that land of my people's future, where free men will plow and sow and reap, and where little children will sing, under the spacious blue skies of Eretz Israel, my spirit will bless you for having made it possible.

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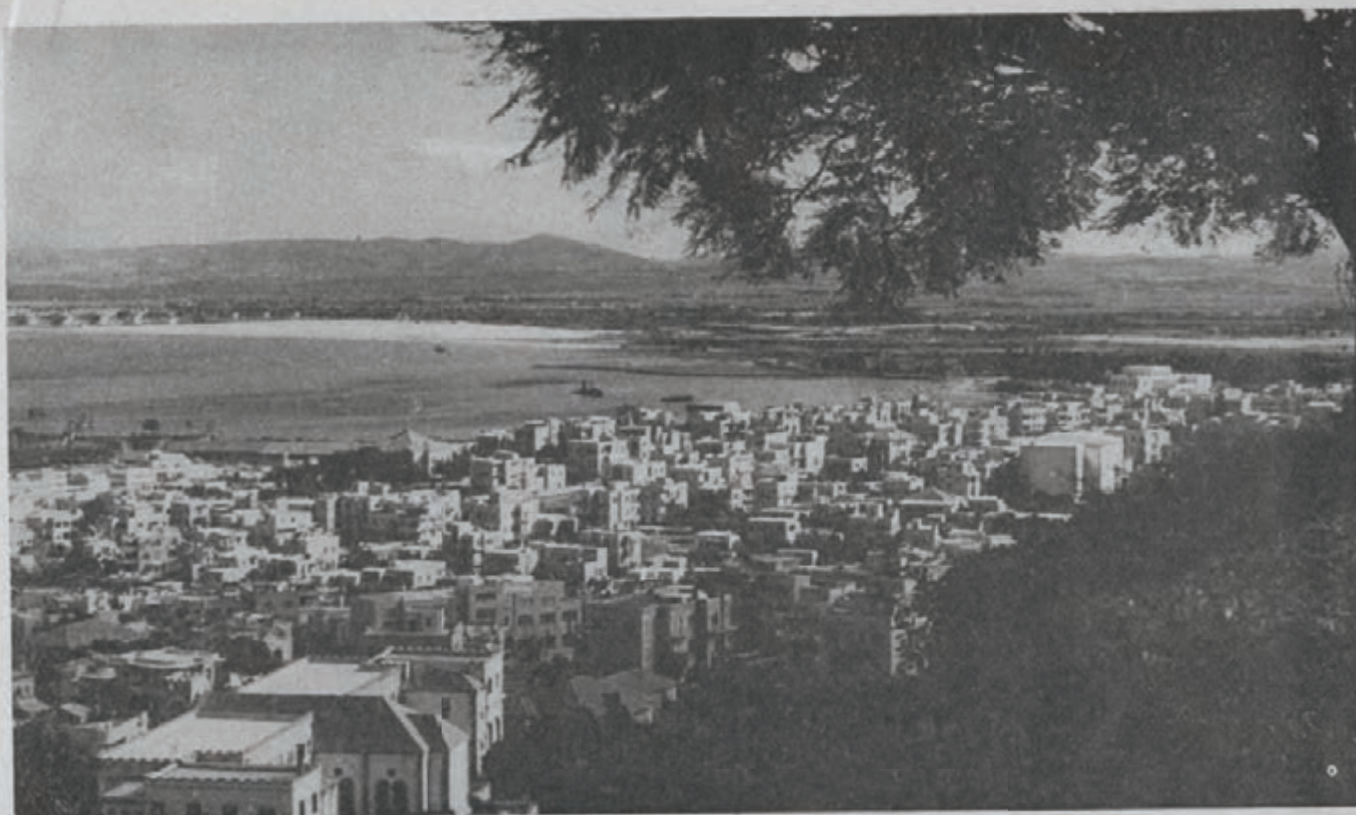
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Some twenty years later, during the Second World War, *six million Jews* were put to death. But there really was no longer any civilized world sensitive enough to be *shocked or aroused*. We were now in an age of decaying sanctities. The world was so surfeited with its corpses and with the outrages of a generation of planned and consummated evil, that its spirit was dulled and stupefied.

A Disastrous Decline

This disastrous decline in the fortune of our people—from the forty-seven dead in Kishinev in 1903 to the six million killed in 1942 and 1943—traces, for many of us, also the ascending line of our intensive concentration on the Zionist solution. Our Zionism, the Zionism of the men of my generation, is the product of forty years of Jewish experience which we witnessed with our own eyes, and in which we participated. Of course, from our background, from the redolent memories of Bible and Prayerbook, we derived a certain awareness, a certain apperception, but it was life itself which drove home the lesson; it was life itself which—as was the case with the Prophet Ezekiel—which put forth its hand and gave us the *Sefer Ha'Megillah*, the Roll of the Book, upon which were written, "*Kimm, V'hege, V'hi*," Lamentation, Mourning and Woe, and we were commanded to eat what we found, to "eat the roll," the *Sefer Ha'Megillah*, and then go and speak to the House of Israel.

There were many during those catastrophic years who refused to eat and to digest what they found. They turned away from these unpleasant and stark realities of life, from this frightful decline and its clear implications, and sought escape in wishful thinking, in compensating day-dreams. The Jewish problem, they maintained, would solve itself quite simply, with the triumph of democracy, or internationalism, or socialism, or communism. In the meantime, however, the Jewish problem in Europe almost solved itself through the extermination of the Jews of Europe. The forces of history, as far as the Jews at least were concerned, were seemingly not content to wait until the Jewish doctrinaire could prove his point. Last month refugee Jews were demonstrating through the streets of



OPEN THIS GATE! Air view of Haifa, Palestine's principal port, to which hundreds of thousands of Jewish survivors, still languishing in DP camps and at former scenes of slaughter, have fixed their gaze with relentless determination.

Vienna carrying banners demanding the right to go to Palestine immediately. On many of these banners were inscribed those immortal words of Bialik, "*Im Yesh Zedek, Yofiya Miyad*"—if there is to be justice, let it appear now!

Millions Would Be Alive

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Peace and of Goodness. It was our people who first directed man's glance toward these frontiers but, unfortunately, we ourselves have not yet reached even our first frontier—our own settled peaceful home as a people. We are still the hunted nomads of the world. Some archaeologists have said of the plow that it was first invented in Palestine; the vision of "beating the sword into a plow" was also invented in Palestine, and by our people. Our people gave to mankind many great visions: Justice, Brotherhood, Peace, the concepts of the Dignity of Human Life, and of *Eichmanuth* (Compassion). But like Prometheus, who was tormented for having brought the gift of fire to mankind, we helped mankind, but could not help ourselves.

The time has come now, urgently the time has come, for us to help ourselves. We need a Home. That is the cry that rises above all others that I can hear from Belsen, from Dachau, from Oswiecim, from the hearts of our fellow-Jews whom men now call Displaced Persons. They are Displaced Persons only because we are a Displaced People. That is the root of their tragedy, and of the six million who perished, and of all the tragedies in the long centuries of our national homelessness. We are a Displaced People and we need a home. That is the motor power which drives those pursued and hunted ships of

our extra-legal, and more than legal, immigrants who are seeking the shores of Palestine with a desperate longing unknown in all the annals of nation-building.

I am proud that three of these ships reached the shores of Palestine this week. For shame, that the ships of the proudest Navy on earth should be employed to intercept the ships which are carrying to sanctuary the saddest and the most deserving home-seekers on earth. Rather should the ships of Great Britain be carrying these Jews TO Palestine. For Great Britain, in the sight of the whole world, undertook to facilitate Jewish immigration into Palestine! And for that matter, the ships of the United States might well be carrying these refugees to Palestine—the ships of the United States which carried 250,000 Nazi prisoners to these shores for temporary dwelling might just as well have carried a quarter of a million Jews who were doomed to the gas chambers of the Nazis.

Hope Cannot Be Surrendered

A quarter of a century ago Great Britain, the United States, and fifty other nations of the world, recognized this need of the Jewish people for a home; hence the Balfour Declaration; hence the Palestine Mandate. We waited for that recognition for 1900 years. We set out building our home under very difficult conditions and in very difficult times. For at that time, in 1920-21, European Jewry had been ravaged and impoverished by years of war, and Russian Jewry was completely isolated. But the idealism and the goodwill, as well as the political motivations which were responsible for the Balfour Declaration, did not carry far beyond the close of the war. Then obstacles, one more formidable than the other, were set up in our way. The Mandatory Government seemed to be determined to delay, to constrict, and, finally, completely to frustrate the building of the Jewish National Home.

When the most terrible moment in our history arrived and Palestine might have served as a place of escape for the millions doomed to wholesale slaughter in the Nazi gas chambers, the doors of Palestine were practically shut, and they are still shut. A Committee of *Inquiry*, the seventeenth of its kind—each one in turn devised to circumvent the clear intent and purpose of the Mandate—is now at work to determine what has already been determined, to ascertain what has already been ascertained. . . .

I do not know what the Committee's report will be, but of one thing I am certain: the Jewish people, inside and outside of Palestine, will not agree, because it cannot agree, to any proposal which will rob them of their historic right, and of their historic hope, to rebuild themselves as a nation in the national home of Israel. Of one thing I am certain: they will not agree, because

they cannot agree, to any proposal which will restrict, on political grounds, Jewish immigration into Palestine or deny the right of Sanctuary to any homeless Jews.

Our people's essential hope which expressed itself not only in Political Zionism but in the continuing Messianic Hope through two thousands years is *national restoration*: the national status of a free people among the free peoples of the earth. That hope cannot be surrendered. No generation of Jews can or will surrender it. Nobody in Israel is authorized or can be authorized to surrender it. A substitute solution may be forced upon us; substitute solutions were forced upon us throughout our history. But we will resist wherever resistance is warranted, and to the degree that it is warranted. "We may be betrayed; we will not be conquered!"

Anybody who has any doubts about it simply does not understand the genius of the Jewish people. To anyone, friend and foe alike, who has any doubt about how the Jewish people will react to the emergencies of the hour, I would recommend to read a page of our history—one page in the Bible which describes the First Restoration after the Babylonian Exile. It is as fresh and as revealing today as it was 2500 years ago, when Nehemiah wrote it down in his Diary.

The walls of Jerusalem had to be rebuilt. The exiles who had returned lived precariously in the midst of other peoples in Judea. These other peoples were determined to keep the Jews few, and to keep them weak. The national rights and power of the Jewish people had to be re-established and re-affirmed. The symbol of that was the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem which had been razed. At once, all the other peoples who lived in and around Palestine formed what we would call today, an Arab League: "Sanballat the Samaritan, Tobias the Ammonite, Geshem the Arabian", were grieved—I am quoting the text now—when "they heard that there was come a man, Nehemiah, to seek the welfare of the Children of Israel." It grieved them. When the Jews began to build, they laughed them to scorn, and despised them. "What can these feeble Jews do?" said Sanballat. "Will they revive the stones out of the heap of rubbish?" And Tobias the Ammonite (who had no business there in the first place, any more than Ibn Saud has business there now) expressed the thought that even that which they, these feeble Jews, will build, "If a fox go up, he will break down the stone wall." But Nehemiah went on with the building, and to the leaders of the Arab League of his day he said, "*Lachem ain chelek u'zdakah v'zicharon be Yerushalaim*"—you have neither a portion nor any right, nor any memories in this Land. You do not belong here!

When these enemies saw that the rebuilding went forward anyhow, and the breaches began to be stopped, "They conspired to come and fight against Jerusalem, and



THE CHALLENGE "NAKUM VE NIVNEH" (Let Us Get Up and Build), is being answered in the plains and on the mountain slopes of Eretz Israel. Above is a general view of NIR DAVID, in the Valley of Jezreel, one of the 200 agricultural settlements founded on the land of the Keren Kayemeth.

lay it waste." Then Nehemiah organized his *haganah*. "And it came to pass from that time forward that half of my young men carried on with the work and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows and the coats of mail; every one with one hand carried on with his work and with the other held his weapon." That is the way Jerusalem was rebuilt after the first Exile. That is the way Jerusalem will be rebuilt after the second Exile!

It was only after the work was finally finished and a strong wall was built, that Sanballat and his friends decided to invite Nehemiah to a Roundtable. Four or five times, declares the Bible, they invited him, and even offered him assistance. They were ready to negotiate *after* the Wall was built. History will repeat itself in connection with our Second Restoration, provided we remain true to the spirit of the lion-hearted Nehemiah and when we hear of the challenge which was his challenge to the people of his day, "*Lechu Ve Nivneh*," Come and let us build, we shall respond as the Jews of his day responded: "*Nakum Ve Nivneh*," Let us get up and build!

Sees Stern Inevitability

There is a stern inevitability about this thing we are engaged in. This week—a year after the great triumph of the United Nations over Nazism and Fascism—I read in the papers the following items:

- (1) "Plans for combating anti-Semitism in Hungary formed the major topic of discussions at a conference of the Jewish National Committee, which concluded today at Sziget. Speakers pointed out that pro-Nazi elements in the country are continuing to incite sections of the Hungarian population against Jews and to spread anti-Semitic propaganda.
- (2) "General Donovan warned that the legacy of anti-Semitism left by the Nazis may destroy the Jews in Europe. The poison of anti-Semitism, which the Nazis employed as a major weapon in the war against democracy, now bars the way to the rehabilitation of the surviving Jews in Europe and makes imperative this emigration to other lands, chiefly Palestine."

This is not a Zionist or a Jew speaking. This is the head of a Department of the American Government which has the most direct and the most accurate sources of information about all that is transpiring in Europe.

"It is clearly impossible for the Jews to remain in Europe," he said, "anti-Semitism is too strong. Defeat and demoralization have intensified it. The Jews know well that laws and enactments will not correct it; they must move."

- (3) "The Board of Deputies of British Jews at a meeting last night in London discussed the growth of

anti-Semitism in England and measures to combat it."

- (4) "A mass meeting of 600 Jews today protested that anti-Semitic riots which broke out here Sunday during a soccer match between the Hakoach and the Police Association team in Vienna."

I need not refer to the fact which has already been mentioned, that Jews were shot and beaten by German police in the U. S. Zone of Occupation in Germany. The same Nazis only this time using American weapons and under American supervision . . .

Here is the Scroll — the *Sefer Ha'Megillah* — and we must eat it. There is no way out of it. The triumph of freedom in the Second World War has no more liquidated anti-Semitism and made the position of the Jew secure than the triumph of democracy in the First World War, or the triumph of enlightenment and emancipation in the 19th Century. The League of Nations did little for us, nor will the UNO do more, unless the Jewish people is granted national status and permitted to take its rightful place among the United Nations. UNO is composed of representatives of Nations, of States; we are on the outside. Although the Palestine Mandate speaks of a Jewish National Home, the Jewish National Home of Palestine has not yet been given national status, and is not represented in the UNO. We are still feeding on the crumbs off alien tables.

We Must Press Forward

I ask: is it really in the highest interests of Great Britain and of the United States to keep us out—to deny this ancient people that has served mankind not unworthily through these centuries, a people that has suffered so much, the opportunity which is not denied even to the smallest and the most recent of peoples on earth? To deny it the right of national status and a National Home?

Because there is no other way out for us, we must press forward with unrelenting determination. We, Jews of the United States, must demand of our own Government that it reflect the true sentiment of the American people as it was twice expressed by the Congress of the United States and innumerable times by State Legislatures and Governors of States. We must demand of our Administration that it reflect that pro-Palestine, pro-Zionist sentiment of the American people and translate it into action.

We demand a new deal in our State Department. While we are lavish with our criticism of the British Colonial Office, and justly so, let us bear in mind that our State Department has been as little cooperative with us as the Colonial Office in London and for less valid reasons, because our country does not have those complicated imperial interests in the Middle East that

Great Britain has. The Jews of the United States, if they want to build and are earnest about this building, and understand that there is no other way out for our people, and that this is the hour of decision, must turn to their Chief Executive, to the President of the United States, to President Truman, and demand of him to fulfill his own Party's pledge.

We have moral power. Our Cause is a great moral Cause. We have political power, if we would once learn how to use it, and not fritter it away. It is not un-American to use the political power which one possesses in urging upon our Government to fulfill pledges made by our country and to give expression to the will of the American people as represented in Resolutions passed overwhelmingly by the Congress of the United States.

In my judgment, it is real Americanism for the Jews of America to band together as a strong force and go to their duly elected representatives and to the Executive Branch of our government and say: America had a hand in the framing of the Balfour Declaration; America has a Convention with England which granted it rights and by which it assumed obligations toward Palestine. The American people has, over the years, voiced an attitude of deepest sympathy toward the Zionist Movement. We demand of the Government which should represent the spirit of the people, that in this hour of decision the weight of our Government should be put squarely behind the Zionist program.

It is the essence of democratic technique and procedure to reward your friends and to punish your foes; to repudiate people and administrations which fail to live up to their own party commitments, and to their own pledges. Because I speak with such strong conviction about this matter I have been accused of being politically partisan; of favoring one political party as against another. I want the Zionists of America to know that I belong to no party; that I serve the interests of no political party. I try to fulfill my duties as an American citizen to the best of my ability. I believe I have tried to live the life of a loyal, cooperative American citizen. Beyond that I have no other interests than the salvation of my people, and I will go to any party or to any public official or to any government and I will knock on any door in the world, crying: Help my people; my people needs your help!

I want to be true to the spirit of Nehemiah, to the spirit of Herzl. They have shown the way for all of us. They, and giants like them, gave our people the secret of survival and immortality. It is in their spirit, and under the impact of their vision, that we, the children of this generation, placed at the crossroads of destiny, pledge ourselves to carry on until their dream, which is the dream of Israel, is finally fulfilled—until Israel is re-established as a free and happy people in its own land.

You Are Cordially Invited to Attend the

TRIBUTE DINNER

In Honor of

DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Sunday Evening, March Thirty-first

Nineteen hundred and forty-six



Tendered by

BNAI ZION

and the

NATIONAL SPONSORS COMMITTEE

R.S.V.P.

Dietary Laws Observed

¶ This Dinner tendered by the B'nai Zion and the National Sponsors Committee of Zionist leaders representing all sections of the country will record our admiration for Dr. Abba Hillel Silver for his achievements in the field of Jewish scholarship and for his eloquent advocacy and guidance of the Zionist Movement at the helm of which he stands today.

¶ We will also express our gratitude for the inspiration and militant leadership which his superb gifts of mind and heart have enabled him to bring to the difficult tasks he has performed as National Chairman of the United Palestine Appeal, Co-Chairman of the United Jewish Appeal, Co-Chairman of the American Zionist Emergency Council and as President of the Zionist Organization of America. He is now leading the struggle for the realization of our people's most cherished aspirations—the redemption and upbuilding of Eretz Israel as a Jewish Commonwealth.

¶ The proceeds of this Dinner will be dedicated toward the redemption through the Jewish National Fund of a land tract in Palestine to be designated as NACHLATH SILVER, thus linking the name of Dr. Silver with the ancestral soil of Eretz Israel for which he has labored these last three decades.

Dr. Abba Hillel Silver Dinner Committee

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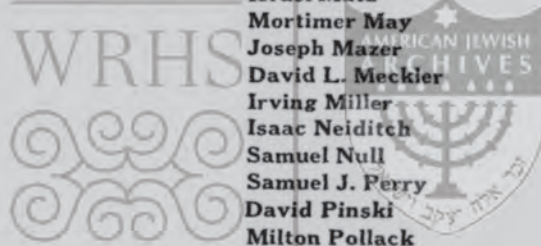
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