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Zionist Organization of America, 1949.

ADDRESS OF DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
BEFORE THE 52nd ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE ZOA
NEW YORK CITY
MAY 29, 1949

Since we last met in Convention in July 1948, our Movement scored major political victories. The State of Israel was recognized de facto or de jure by more than 50 nations, and on May 11th of this year, was admitted to the United Nations. Israel is now a recognized sovereign and independent nation within the community of the nations of the world. Thus, the primary Zionist objective has been triumphantly achieved.

I shall not here rehearse the events of the past ten months for they are very fresh in your mind. I should like to emphasize here but two facts which are not without guiding significance for the future. ^{Began} What was achieved during the past year was achieved through bitter struggle on the battlefields of Palestine and on the political battlefields here in the United States. The United Nations was unable to implement its recommendations of November 1947. The Jews of Palestine had to implement them with their blood and sacrifices. We are not unmindful or ungrateful for the moral strengthening which the United Nations resolution gave us, and for its assistance during the armistice negotiations. But it is clear that there would have been no armistice in the fighting in Palestine if the Jews of Palestine had not fought and decisively defeated and discomfited the invading armies. It is the people of Israel who established the State of Israel. And it is the people of Israel who, remaining strong and determined, will be the decisive factor in the difficult negotiations which are now going on touching peace treaties, borders, the status of Jerusalem, and the Arab refugee problem.

^{Ben} During the past ten months there were some very dangerous political moments for the new-born State of Israel, especially the one which followed the publication of Count Bernadotte's report. In September, the American government gave its unqualified endorsement of the Bernadotte plan which cut away ~~two-thirds~~ ^{two-thirds} of its territory from the State of Israel and isolated the city of Jerusalem from it. ^{Under UN control} A determined effort was made by the representatives of our government and those of Great Britain to rush through an approval of this plan in the General Assembly of the United Nations meeting in Paris, capitalizing on the public indignation which the ^{assassination} assassination of Count Bernadotte had aroused. This was a reversal on the part of our government almost as serious of that of March 19th when it called for the scuttling of the Partition scheme and proffered ^{temporary} a trusteeship in its stead. It was necessary for the American Zionist Emergency Council to organize again a large-scale political action on the American scene in order to persuade our government to abandon the position which had been taken by Secretary of State Marshall. This was not at all easy. As so often in the

past, our government, both the Executive Branch and the State Department, suddenly became completely non-communicate on the subject. ^{over} Fortunately, the national elections were not far off, and after much arduous labor we succeeded, on the eve of the national elections, in obtaining a clear statement from both the political candidates, who had long maintained a determined silence on the subject, in opposition to the Bernadotte plan and in favor of the territorial integrity of Israel. Following his election, President Truman carried out the earlier commitment of his administration to give de jure recognition to the State of Israel, as soon as general elections were held in Israel. (The Export-Import Bank granted a \$100,000,000 loan to the State of Israel, and the American government this month voted for the admission of Israel into the United Nations.)

When the threat of British military intervention in the Palestine war loomed dangerously in January of this year, the Emergency Council was forced to organize another campaign to mobilize American public opinion, and again, when there was the danger of sanctions' being imposed upon Israel by the Security Council in case Israel refused to withdraw its troops from the Negev.

I refer to these matters because they should be guides for the future.

The political backing of our government will be needed by the State of Israel in the future as in the past, particularly in the critical negotiations which are now going on with Arab States. It may be necessary again and again to rally American public opinion in defense of the political rights of Israel. Just as the Israeli are not free as yet to demobilize because their security has not yet been fully established, so must we not think of demobilizing for some time to come.

There are those who believe that the time has again come to substitute quiet back-door "shtadlanut" in Washington - the sort of futile and selfdeceiving "shtadlanut" which our Movement had to abandon some six years ago - for organized action. I should like to caution against it. The interest of the State of Israel in Washington until peace is fully established must be looked after not only by the official representatives of the State of Israel in Washington who have a competence and authority all of their own and in whose sphere of action we should not meddle, but also by the continued alerted and directed solicitude of organized American Jewry. It is as citizens of the United States that we have the right to be heard, and our representations will be helpful in the future as in the past. It is clear that all such representation should be made by the made by the American Zionist Emergency Council which is an American body speaking for American citizens, and not by the Jewish Agency which is an international body, the propriety of whose intervention might well be challenged.

Certain political circles in Washington who were never too favorable to us have under duress accepted the fact of the existence of the State of Israel. What they want to see now is the liquidation of American Zionism on the American scene so that the organized public opinion which so frequently in the past exercised a restraining influence upon their hostile maneuvers in the State Department would not have to be reckoned with in the future. They are opposed to what they call Zionist pressure on American foreign policy. Other pressures from oil interests, from missionary educational circles, from Arab or British sources, are by them not considered pressures, and are, therefore, immune from criticism. They want our government to withdraw from all contacts with organized American Zionism.

This trend is not without serious dangers. The State of Israel will be in need of political defense for a long time to come, especially here in the United States, for the attitude of our government will continue to be decisive as far as the political fortunes of Israel are concerned. Opinion in government circles on all matters relative to the State of Israel has never been of one piece. American Jewish opinion must, therefore, remain organized to defend the legitimate interests of the State of Israel which it helped to bring into existence. There is as yet no stability in Palestine. No peace treaties have been signed. The boundaries of Palestine have not yet been fixed. The status of Jerusalem has not yet been determined. As you know, there is a powerful campaign on for the internationalization of the whole of Jerusalem. The explosive Arab refugee problem has not yet been solved, and it may well plague the situation in the Near East for a long time to come. It is clear that much will yet have to be done in the purely political field to make secure what was achieved with so much effort and sacrifice. The liquidation of organized American Zionist political activities at this time would simply play into the hands of those forces in Washington which have never been friendly to us.

It is for this reason that I have strongly urged the continuation of the American Zionist Emergency Council, (and I am pleased that in spite of the initial opposition of one party, affirmative action was taken by all the Zionist parties in the United States.)

This brings me to a consideration of the second subject which has agitated Zionist circles during the past year. Hardly was the ink dry upon the proclamation which set up the State of Israel, when a veritable chorus of voices from all directions began to clamor with varying degrees of stridency for the immediate dissolution of the Zionist Organization of America. Some were quick to publish an obituary, pronounce the eulogy, and reach out for the legacy. I am reminded of an item which appeared some years ago in a humorous journal: "As to Prince Kropotkin's

denial of his being dead, we deplore his tendency to rush into print without first fully ascertaining the facts."

Former enemies of Zionism - the American Council for Judaism, assimilationists generally, Buddhists and journalists who had to swallow the bitter pill of the establishment of the State of Israel, attempted to compensate themselves for their frustration by venting their spleen upon the Zionist Movement and by demanding its immediate extirpation. Joining in this chorus were the spokesmen of some national Jewish organizations who have been elbowed out of the centre of Jewish life during the years of the Zionist triumphant march to victory and who hankered now to get back into a dominant position to which neither their numbers, their achievements nor their representative character entitled them. (Some Zionists, too, added their voices - baritones as well as sopranos - to this homicidal chorus. Some of them were quite innocent. They believed that now that the Messiah was come, there was no longer any need for a Zionist Movement. Others were not quite so innocent. Their funeral dirge was chanted only for the Zionist Organization of America. They did not encompass in their threnody either the Poale Zion ^{or} the Hadassah or the Mizrachi or any ^{of} other parties.)

Within a few hours after the establishment of the State, when nearly every single major political and economic issue was as yet unsettled, the ZOA, which had hardly caught its breath from the colossal political efforts in which it had been engaged, was peremptorily challenged to produce immediately a detailed program for reorganization, re-orientation and future action, or else to put its head on the block to be decapitated. When the answer was made that considerable time must elapse before a great movement can make necessary readjustments to radically changed conditions and that it should make them only after the implications of such changes have been carefully studied, and that furthermore, precipitate action was neither indicated nor judicious, the leaders of the ZOA were broadly denounced as hopelessly obtuse people who did not grasp that a great revolution has taken place in Jewish life, who did not have the sense to realize that something new had really occurred, and who were only concerned with hanging on to positions, power and organizational apparatus.

I did not take this raucous chorus and its banalities quite seriously. I knew that well-intentioned Zionists who had been misled by the justifiable enthusiasm of the moment to lose their perspective would very soon regain it. I was confident also that the Zionist Movement as such, as soon as it has had an opportunity officially to express itself on this subject, would overwhelmingly reject this counsel of suicide so generously proffered by so many unsolicited counsellors. This is precisely what the Actions Committee did at its meeting in Jerusalem early this month. As far as the enemies of Zionism are concerned, they wanted our Movement dead a long time ago, but it is they whom history is ignominiously

consigning to the "kevurat hamor."

No nation liquidates its minimum defense forces or closes down its departments of national defense even after victory in war has been achieved, for it is realized that the idyllic conditions of permanent peace and security exist nowhere in the world.

I have indicated earlier the continuing need for an organized and alerted American Jewry in behalf of protecting politically the new State of Israel, which has certainly not yet passed the broken seas of political dangers into a safe harbor. As far as the economic problems involved in achieving the Zionist goal, that work in a sense has just begun. If Zionism means "kibbutz galuyot", the in-gathering, not necessarily of all the Jews of the world, but certainly of all who wish to go to Israel or who must go there ~~and their numbers will reach into the millions~~ then the year 1948-49 will witness not the consummation of the Zionist ideal in terms of this in-gathering, but only a substantial beginning. It will take years to achieve this goal - many years.

It will require a constant, sustained and costly effort on the part of world Jewry to make this possible. This will have to be done in the ^{face} ~~fact~~ of the growing demands of the local needs of world Jewry outside of Israel for its own cultural, religious, and philanthropic life and institutions, which will claim, and justly so, increasing attention. World Jewry - and that means, by and large, American Jewry - will have to be kept steadfastly organized, educated, inspired for this exacting and long-range program. I know of no body in American Jewry that is better equipped and organized to perform this historic task, this second phase of our national redemption, than the Zionists who so magnificently helped in the performance of the first task - the creation of the State of Israel.

Non-Zionists, to be sure, will help, even as some non-Zionists helped in the final stages of the political struggle, although some of these non-Zionists choose to forget and would like the world to forget how many obstacles they put in our way during the long, hard years of struggle, and how much they disrupted and dis-organized American Jewry's effort in behalf of the establishment of the Jewish State at a time when the Zionists were struggling to unite American Jewry in its behalf, how many stumbling blocks they put in the way of our political work in Washington, ~~and~~ how much residual mischief has been left in our communities by their former oppositional activities. But the Jewish people will not hold it against them. We welcomed their help in the final phases of our struggle although even then they had to be carefully watched. There was one moment on the very eve of May 14th when these well-intentioned non-Zionists, with the aid of some Zionist leaders - who also had to be watched, so glib were they, so accommodating and so unpredictable - had almost succeeded in indefinitely postponing the proclamation of the State of Israel and in substituting a new trusteeship for Palestine which

was sponsored by our State Department. We are glad that these American non-Zionists are now receiving their full measure of praise and generous recognition at the hands of the government leaders in Israel who, for reasons of state, of course, seem to be giving priority in their acclaim to American Jews who qualify by reason of their accredited status as non-Zionists and their attributes of wealth.

But while recognizing and welcoming the services and cooperation of all Jews in the economic phase of our work, it would be a serious blunder to entrust the leadership and direction of this work into the hands of those who even at this late hour, when the political objectives of Zionism have been achieved, still prefer to be known as non-Zionists. In the first place, it is not called for by any considerations of fund-raising. The back-bone of the givers and the workers in our communities in recent UJA campaigns are no longer the non-Zionists. Eastern European Jews have largely taken over everywhere. By and large certainly not exclusively they are the leaders; they are the givers; they are the workers. And they do not belong to the non-Zionist constellation. The fiction, however, is still kept alive that the success of the campaigns depends upon having out in the front on the national level the glamorous name or names of non-Zionists, men of means who themselves need not even set the example of giving, but the sheer magic of whose names automatically inspires others to give. Some of these non-Zionists have been converted quite recently not to Zionism, but to the inevitability of the State of Israel. They wish to have nothing to do with the Zionist organizations or agencies in the United States. They insist upon direct connections with the State of Israel, and there are those in the State of Israel who, for reasons best known to themselves, welcome this direct connection, even though it means by-passing, and as a result also, the ultimate liquidation of organized Zionism in the United States which has in the past and will alone in the future bear the heat and the brunt of the long, sustained effort in behalf of Israel. step

I am afraid that these leaders in Israel are penny-wise and pound-foolish. In a sense, they are not even penny-wise; for the violent imposition of the present leadership upon the UJA against the wishes of large sections of American Zionists will, I am afraid, not net a single additional farthing to the campaign. The campaign of 1949 will net considerably less than that of 1948, and the campaign of 1948, under the same leadership, was far from being a success. Alibis, I am sure, are at hand, and they will be used. But when all is said and done, what purpose was served by this intrusive action of the Agency Executive, and what Zionist objective was advanced by weakening and undermining the position and authority of accredited American Zionist leaders vis-a-vis the non-Zionists and the American Jewish - and for that matter - non-Jewish public generally? What has been gained by weakening the position of the ZOA in the UPA and by depriving the UPA of its

very minimal control over the funds which enabled it to maintain a semblance of autonomy and administrative authority?

A strong Zionist organization with a solid core of tried and experienced Zionists augmented by all such who, as friends of Israel, are, now that the ideological issue has been settled, ready to join, is essential to sustain the long-range interest of American Jewry in the economic needs of Israel to insure that in the coming years, when the Israeli honeymoon period is over, the needs of Israel will not be pushed aside. Now is the time for the Zionist Organization of America to expand and to invite every American Jew to join its ranks. Now is the time to make of every Z. O. A. member a share-holder, an investor-large or small-in Israel. Now is the time for the Z. O. A. through its educational and propaganda channels, to become the transmitter to all American Jews of the needs, the story of the material and cultural accomplishments, and the inspiration of Israel. This should be an era of expansion, not of contraction, for the Zionist Organization of America.

There is yet a third reason for maintaining and strengthening for the Zionist Movement in the United States and throughout the world. Zionism has always stood for a certain definite way of Jewish life, not only for the Jewish people in re-established Jewish State, but also for the Jewish communities throughout the world. It stood for a positive, affirmative Jewish life, of rich cultural content, of deep spiritual values, of a life linked historically with the past and geographically with the Jewish communities throughout the world. It was opposed to assimilation or to what is now euphemistically called integration, which means not the eager and active participation in the total life of the countries where Jews are citizens, which Zionists have always advocated, but submergence and self-annihilation. Zionism was always opposed to the definition of Judaism as a church and of Jews as members of a Mosaic persuasion. Translated into concrete terms, the Zionist position meant giving our children a maximal Jewish education, acquainting them with the Hebrew language and literature and with the cultural achievements of their people throughout the ages. It meant a Jewish home wherein the customs, ceremonies and the rich traditions of our millennial life are revered and exemplified. It meant active participation in the religious life of the synagogue and the support of Jewish scholarship, learning and academies of study. "A return to Judaism," declared Theodor Herzl, "must precede a return to the Jewish land."

I know of no organized group in Jewish life that has so consistently throughout the years worked for this program of positive Jewish life, of Jewish survival and Jewish advance, as that of the Zionists. The need for such a body to continue to defend this Jewish way of life will be as great in the future as in past, if not greater. The establishment of the State of Israel will be seized

upon by many Jews as an excuse to assimilate now that they can no longer be accused or need no longer to accuse themselves of cowardice in running away from a homeless and persecuted people. Since the Jewish nation is now secure in Israel, they will argue, they no longer need to remain Jews outside of Israel. There will be other rationalizations offered for assimilation. They will all have this one thing in common—a denial of the classic concept of a Jewish people which, inside and outside of Israel, is held together by historic, cultural and spiritual ties even though politically it shares no common destiny, and is obligated to no common political allegiance.

I believe that American Zionism should remain organized to meet this challenge because it is best equipped to do so. It should be the catalyst for all elements in Jewish life which are interested in purposeful Jewish survival. It need not duplicate their activities, but it can stimulate, guide and coordinate them. It took us many hard years of struggle to establish the ascendancy of our ideas in the Jewish communities of this country. Let us not lose it now by default.

This brings me to a consideration of yet another matter which has agitated our circles during the past year. While I am interested in the survival and progress of the Zionist Movement the world over, I am not in favor of setting up a monolithic global organization possessed of such unlimited and unqualified authority as to undermine the autonomy of existing Zionist bodies in the countries of the world. There is an entire range in types of organization, and we need not adopt either the one extreme of complete uncoordinated decentralization, or the other extreme of total, absolutist regimented control which wipes out every vestige of independent thought and action on the part of independent Jewish communities in the world. They simply will not stand for it!

I do not believe in a type of organization which permits the Executive of the Jewish Agency, sitting in New York or in Tel Aviv, to dictate to the Jewish community of the United States or of Canada or of Mexico whom they must appoint as Chairman or as Executive Director of UPA campaign. I believe that this is unwarranted and impertinent intrusion, and I am persuaded that it will ultimately disrupt and disintegrate the World Zionist Movement as well as the local Zionist bodies.

It was over this issue that I and my colleague, Dr. Emanuel Neumann resigned from the Chairmanship of the American Section of the Jewish Agency. Those who have raised the cry of "breach of discipline" have simply begged the question. I am generally suspicious of all those who, in the midst of a controversy involving fundamental issues, raise the cry of discipline or unity of peace. As a rule they

are after something quite different. I recall that in 1943 when at the American Jewish Conference I urged the adoption of a full-blooded resolution in behalf of the Jewish commonwealth. I was denounced for breaking the unity of American Jewry. at a critical time by insisting on something which, after all, was not so very urgent since what was urgent was the opening of the doors of Palestine for Jewish immigration. Well, it was the unity shouters at that Conference who did not know what they were talking about although they cloaked themselves in the garb of utter respectability and practicability, and cast me in the role of a willful and wild-eyed trouble-maker.

There have been those who attempted to represent the controversy over this issue as an inner Zionist wrangle, and as due to my personal intransigence and intractability. The issue was deliberately distorted by certain individuals and groups who stood to profit from such a distortion. Some of the same people and groups attempted a few short years ago to misinterpret and distort the position which I and my colleagues took at the Basle Congress, which has since been so completely vindicated. Similarly was the position which I and my colleagues took at the Actions Committee eight months ago on the issue of the formal separation of the Zionist Movement from the State of Israel confounded and misrepresented by the same people. In connection with the present issue, a campaign of defamation and character assassination was launched and was climaxed in a series of articles against me by a scribbler, in one of the Yiddish newspapers, whose columns in recent months have been so filled with enthusiastic pro-Israel material that one might gather the impression that this newspaper had for years huffed and puffed to bring the State of Israel into existence. This series of vituperative articles was inspired and publically approved by the Poale Zion. I am confident that just as our position on the earlier issues has been vindicated, so will our position on the subject of the autonomy of Zionist organizations be completely vindicated before very long.

The facts are quite clear. As Chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency I was, of course, interested to maintain the full authority of our Agency. Nevertheless, I maintained throughout the position that the Jewish Agency should not interfere in the internal affairs of the UPA. (The selection of a Chairman for the UPA and the UJA campaign was not a matter which was within the competence of the Executive of the Jewish Agency. At no time in the past did the Jewish Agency intervene in the matter of selecting chairman for the UPA or a General Chairman for the UJA campaign. This would have been tantamount to usurping authority which had not been given to the Executive either by the Actions Committee or by any Zionist Congress.)

✓ When the controversy developed around Mr. Montor's resignation, and when the Committee of Contributors and Workers, which he sired, brought the matter of the reorganization of the UPA, demanded by them, to the attention of the Jewish Agency, the Committee was informed that the problem concerned the UPA and that all questions concerning the reorganization of the UPA should be directed to the governing body of the UPA. If the UPA desired to consult the Executive of the Jewish Agency on this matter, the Executive would, of course, hold itself in readiness at any time to render any assistance it could. ~~By the unanimous vote of the American section of the Jewish Agency, the Committee of Contributors and Workers was informed "that the UPA is an autonomous body and the Jewish Agency for Palestine in no way determines its structure or form of organization."~~

The UPA referred the matter to the Executive Committee, the Jewish Agency
~~This was the consistent line which I followed throughout and in which the members of the Executive fully concurred.~~ It was under that arrangement that the Executive was able, at the request of the UPA, to work out an agreement with the Committee of Contributors looking to the reorganization of the UPA by the inclusion on its boards of representatives from communities. I personally regarded the reorganization as unnecessary since no community asked for it, and the agitation which Montor started gave the impression to the country that the UPA was a closed corporation controlled by a clique and grossly undemocratic, while actually the UPA was far more democratic and more truly representative than the two other organizations comprised in the United Jewish Appeal. But although I did not approve of the move, I accepted the decision of the Executive, I informed the UPA of the opinion of the Executive, and the UPA promptly accepted its recommendation.

It was after the matter of the reorganization of the UPA was satisfactorily disposed of that some of the members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, led by Dr. Goldmann, took it upon themselves without any request or authorization from the UPA or, for that matter, without having the subject first discussed at a meeting of the Agency Executive and without even apprizing the Chairman, to negotiate with Mr. Morgenthau and Mr. Montor for resuming their positions in the UJA. I regarded this step as an unwarranted intervention. When later on they sought to have the American Section of the Jewish Agency approve a Morgenthau-Montor recommendation to the Board of the UPA, I told them that I regarded it as not within the competence of the Jewish Agency. They nevertheless proceeded to vote such a recommendation to the UPA and the Executive of the UPA promptly turned it down.

Having been rebuffed by the Executive of the UPA, the members of the American Section of the Jewish Agency proceeded to call for reinforcement from the Executive Section in Jerusalem. They requested a plenary session. I did not favor a plenary session. I argued that it was contrary to the interest of the Movement to adopt a procedure which tended to reduce the authority of constituted Zionist bodies in the United States and to destroy their autonomy. I also questioned the

competence of even the entire Executive to insure² administrative directives to the UPA whose right to conduct campaigns in this country in behalf of the Karen Hayesod and the Jewish National Fund had never been questioned since its inception 24 years ago. I considered resigning from the Agency even before the plenary session met, but I was advised by friends that my action would be misinterpreted as being hasty and as evidence of an unwillingness to sit down and talk over with colleagues a serious issue. I accordingly attended the plenary sessions. From all sides there was pressure for a compromise, a compromise which would bring Morgenthau and Montor both into the UJA campaign, but would at the same time safeguard at least a measure of the autonomy of the UPA which had been so cavalierly invaded. I requested that the Chairman of the UPA should attend the sessions as well as the Chairman of the Karen Hayesod and Karen Kayemeth, and that they should participate in the discussions.

After protracted discussions a compromise plan was finally adopted unanimously by the Agency Executive in which I concurred, and which^{was} acceptable also to the Chairman of the UPA and to the heads of its constituent bodies. This unanimous decision of the Executive which would have resolved the controversy, was rejected out of hand by Mr. Morgenthau who insisted on absolute authority for himself and Mr. Montor to run the campaign. I was then requested by the Executive to confer with Mr. Morgenthau who was in Florida at the time. I agreed to undertake this trip at great inconvenience to myself in order to make a final effort to reach an agreement, but Mr. Morgenthau declined to meet. In spite of this willful position taken by Mr. Morgenthau, which flaunted the unanimous wish of the Executive of the World Zionist Movement which had spent many days working out an acceptable formula, the Executive ultimately and abjectly capitulated to his demands. By this time I had had enough—more than enough—and I resigned, and so did my distinguished colleague and President of the Z. C. A., Dr. Emanuel Neumann.

The Executive of the UPA was then asked by the Agency to accept Morgenthau's terms of unconditional surrender. It refused. The Executive of the Jewish Agency then proceeded on its own to sign an agreement with the JDC as well as to announce the Incorporation of the Agency in Albany as a membership corporation to function as an independent fund-raising body in the United States. In a similar high-handed manner, Mr. Locker, without a scintilla of authority, convoked a rump session of the Board of Directors of the UPA. When a second meeting of the Board of Directors of the UPA was finally called after these events had taken place, I stated at that meeting; "Because we are thus confronted with a lamentable fait accompli, we have no other recourse but to advise our friends to refrain from voting at the Board meeting. We do not wish further to prolong the controversy; on the other hand, we cannot approve the action which was taken." The composition of the Board, not the

Executive, of the UPA which, as is wellknown, was always a facade organization whose membership was in recent years largely hand-picked by Mr. Montor and which never seriously participated in the affairs of the UPA, approved the final action of the Jewish Agency Executive; It also forced out of office, Mr. Herman Weismann, the Acting Chairman of the UPA who was carrying on his work most competently and devotedly and substituted for him another acting chairman, who had but a few days previously been among the most violent critics of the contemplated action of the Executive of the Agency.

I know that many factors entered into this controversy. It was aimed against the present administration of the Z. O. A. It was the second phase of the conspiracy which was organized by Mr. Montor in Pittsburgh and whose program was announced in his letter of resignation, whose infamous charges and lies he was compelled finally to retract. Involved also were some Israeli officials who seized the occasion as an opportunity for settling old scores. It was also a heyday for the expansionist hopes of the Poale Zion and their faithful collaborators, Nahum Goldmann and the President of Hadassah. The latter has quite effectively converted the Hadassah into a second woman's auxiliary of the Poale Zion without the knowledge, I suspect, of the rank and file of Hadassah.

Such controversies have a way of drawing into themselves a variety of elements, but the one issue remains clear and unmistakable, and it has not yet been resolved. To what extent will the Jewish Agency in the future dominate Zionist bodies the world over? Does it intend also in the future to dictate to Zionist groups in every country whom they shall select as chairman of thier campaigns, or executive directors or other office personnel? and if so, how long will it be before every self-respecting Zionist will abandon these helpless, front organizations, refusing to be mere robots and messenger boys! and how long will it be before the Zionist bodies begin breaking away from the world organization, or go out of business altogether?

The Actions Committee, at its last meeting in Jerusalem, by-passed this issue. The reason given was that no motion on this issue was made. The reason that no motion was made was, of course, due to the fact that the Z. O. A. members of the Actions Committee were prevented from attending the sessions of the Actions Committee because of the refusal of the Executive of the Agency to postpone the sessions of the Actions Committee for a few weeks until after our Convention. This request was made by a unanimous decision of the Executive of the Z. O. A. It is of interest that the members of the Executive in Israel voted almost unanimously to grant the request of the Z. O. A. It was the members of the American Section led by Nahum Goldmann and the President of Hadassah who, in true comradely spirit, who voted against it. In the past the wishes even of a small party within the Movement were

respected in the matter of setting a convenient date for the sessions of the Actions Committee. In this case the wishes of the largest Zionist body in the world were contemptuously brushed aside! There was of course no urgent reason why the meeting had to be held "davka" in May and not in June!

It is clear, however, that while the issue of the autonomy of Zionist bodies was side-tracked at the Actions Committee meeting, it cannot be permanently side-tracked.

I wish to comment on another issue on which in my judgment this Convention should take a position. Not so long ago the Z.O.A. was urged to join the World Confederation of General Zionists. We were told that there were elements in the Yishuv who did not belong to the parties either of the right or of the left, who were neglected and whose interests were ignored; the non-partisan, non-socialist workers, farmers, merchants and professional people. These were seriously disadvantaged by the fact that they had no world organization to look after them in the same way as the Mapai, the Mapam, the Mizrachi or the Revisionists looked after their followers. Non-party Jews who were arriving in Israel from the D.P. camps and elsewhere had no organization to look after their reception, care and adjustment in the same manner as other immigrants who belonged to these parties. Disturbing reports of grave discrimination and favoritism reached us. The General Zionists throughout the world who traditionally represented the national idea as against the narrower partisan class interests were urged to organize more effectively, and the Z.O.A. was persuaded to join the ranks of the Confederation of General Zionists. I favored the move, and at the time of the Basle Congress, I participated in the reorganization of the Confederation and in the further working out of its program. It was clear from the very outset that within the ranks of the General Zionists there were, as of necessity there would be, various points of view, not only on political matters, but also on economic matters. There were those among the General Zionists who at the Congress favored partition and those who opposed it. We did not permit that issue to split the Confederation. The delegates were given freedom to vote according to the dictates of their conscience. There were also conservatives as well as liberals within the Confederation - those who were more New Deal-ish than others. But we believed that there was room for all of them within the framework of General Zionism which declared in its platform adopted in 1946 that it stands for the strengthening of national unity in the face of separatist tendencies from the right and from the left; for the maintenance of national equilibrium in spite of political, social and cultural divisions; for national unity and national discipline; for the highest forms of social progress, of true democracy and personal freedom; for the development of private initiative, industry, handicrafts, trade, agricultur and the professions;

for the establishment of a unified school system under national control; in such a way that party machinery shall be excluded from education, sport and other similar activities; and for a fair and equal treatment of all immigrants who shall benefit from the assistance and support of the institutions of the Jewish Agency without discrimination.

Here we thought was a program broad enough for progressive and conservatives alike within General Zionism.

But last August the General Zionist party in Palestine split wide open. A group of so-called Progressives broke away from the main body and established itself as an independent political party. Automatically all those who did not secede were branded as reactionary. One must use a very powerful microscope indeed to discover the subtle nuances which distinguish one General Zionist party in Israel from the other. When we were in Israel last August, we strongly deprecated the split in the ranks of the General Zionists and we urged them to get together. At best, they represented a minority party in the country. A division in their ranks meant consigning both of them to utter political futility. We were not the champions of one group as against the other. We strongly urged their re-integration, confident that together, in the course of time, they would come to represent a strong force in the political and economic life of the country, a force for moderation and a balance wheel. At the time I warned them that the split in the ranks of the General Zionists in Israel would result before long in a split in every organization of General Zionists throughout the world. My advice was ignored. In the general elections of last January, as might well have been anticipated, both General Zionist parties received relatively few votes. The seceding so-called Progressive Party received less votes than the older group. Today they constitute two ineffective splinter parties - one inside the governmental coalition and one outside.

As I forewarned, the split in Israel was soon reflected in controversies and threatened splits in General Zionist groups all over the world. It was also reflected in our Z.O.A. Members of the Z.O.A. were soon asked to take sides as between the so-called progressive and reactionary General Zionist parties in Israel. American Zionist leaders who were not prepared to align themselves with the seceding so-called progressive group in Israel and who refused to denounce the men and women who make up the old General Zionist group in Israel - worthy men and women whom we would be proud to have as members in our Z.O.A. - were suddenly pilloried as reactionaries and as enemies of the government of Israel. I was quite amused to see how the small opposition

group within the Z.O.A. which included along with a number of liberals, some very fine old political and economic Tories - plutocrats, brokers, bankers and speculators - suddenly wrapped itself up in an all-blue Talit of Israeli progressivism while it consigned all others to utter damnation and outer darkness.

In my judgment the Confederation of General Zionists, as it is presently constituted, is an anomaly - nay, an absurdity, and our organization only hampers itself by continuing to work through it. One Confederation representing two opposing political parties is a grotesquerie. Our Identification with it threatens to disrupt our own organization. The Z.O.A. should on its own and independently carry on constructive Zionist activities and projects in Israel. We should not be compelled to choose sides in a controversy which seems to be inspired by abnormal partisan egoism and personality incompatibilities. When the General Zionists in Israel will have submerged their differences and united for effective action, the Zionist Organization of America should then reconsider the extent and the manner of its future cooperation with them.

The Z.O.A. has never been reactionary or anti-labor. The record of the years is there. It is open for anyone to read. But the Z.O.A. has never identified itself with the Socialist program or any Socialist party in Israel, and for good and sufficient reasons. In the same way, the Z.O.A. has never been opposed to religion or the religious interests in Israel. Quite the contrary. But it has never identified itself with the Mizrachi or any other religious party in Israel, and likewise, for good and sufficient reasons. In neither instance has it been oppositional, but it has consistently adhered to its own central national idea for a Jewish State for all Jews and for fair opportunity and freedom for all groups. The Z.O.A. has urged public funds for public projects. It understood full well that the upbuilding of the country would be impossible without a large measure of cooperative economic activities, and without a large measure of governmental participation and governmental control. But it also understood the necessity for private capital and private investments. Israel has no vast natural resources which could be collectively exploited to build up the economic life of the country at a pace capable of absorbing a vast immigration. It realized that much private capital would have to be imported - nay, coaxed into the country, and that this would be possible only if private investments were given a sense of security from unfair discrimination and harassment. Private capital which is

so desperately needed in Israel today will not be coaxed into the country when one set of government officials promises it security in law and welcome concessions, while at the same time another set of government officials of equal or greater authority speaks of establishing Socialism in Israel in our time. A strong General Zionist party in Israel would heighten the confidence of those who are being invited to invest their money in the economic life of the country. As such, a strong General Zionist party would contribute vitally to the successful implementation of the second phase of our Zionist program, the "kibbutz galuyot" phase.

The question is then one of degree and of tempo, not of progress or reaction.

The cry has been raised in certain quarters that American Zionist leaders are trying to influence and dominate the economic and social structure of Israel. It is of interest to note that those who have raised this cry against the putative interference of American Zionist leaders have themselves been carrying on a very active and open propaganda and a large-scale financial campaign in the United States to strengthen their favorite political party and its Socialist program in Israel. Quite recently they created a new organization, composed of both Jews and non-Jews in the United States, whose purpose will be to give moral and financial support to the Labor party in Israel. The formula seems to be that if you are prepared to back up the Labor Party, you are not interfering in the internal affairs in Israel, but if, "has ve-halila", you wish to back up any other group in Israel, you are an impudent meddler, as well as an enemy of the government of Israel.

The government of Israel today is a coalition government. The Z.O.A. in whatever projects it sets for itself in Israel, will naturally cooperate with this government or with any other government which may be set up in the future. It cannot work in a vacuum. The Z.O.A. does not look upon the present government of Israel as hostile to it, nor does it regard itself as in any way hostile to the present government of Israel. From this it does not follow, however, that the Z.O.A. is committed to the party platform of the Mapai or that of any other party in the present coalition. It is conceivable that tomorrow some other party may be the major party in a new coalition. That would not obligate the Z.O.A. to subscribe to the program of this other party, although it would obligate the Z.O.A. to continue to work in Israel in the friendliest possible cooperation with the then-existing government.

Finally, let me say that I am strongly in favor of a Federation of all Zionist bodies in the United States for the effective implementation of

those programs which are common to them all. Such a federation was planned by the last Zionist Congress. The liquidation of the present Zionist groupings and their merger into one is presently not feasible. Within such a federation the various parties should be represented on the basis of their numerical strength. There is no formula available in a democracy by which a minority can through some leger-de-main convert itself into a majority.

An effort will be made when this Federation proposal comes to be discussed on the part of one or another party to use the shekel as a basis for representation. Knowing what you know of the manner in which the shekel was distributed and how improperly it reflects the real strength of the existing Zionist bodies in the United States, you will, I am sure, not be taken in by that maneuver.

In my own judgment the American Zionist Emergency Council, which has since been re-organized and whose name has been changed to the American Zionist Council, may well become this contemplated Federation. In the American Zionist Council all the parties have for years worked successfully together in the very important and difficult field of political action. The Council has through the years built up an excellent apparatus, accumulated a vast experience, and established its prestige and authority on the American scene. The American Zionist Council may now be expanded to embrace other activities which are common to all the parties, and a satisfactory scheme of representation can, I believe, be worked out. Thus, without much ado, without much controversy and without the need of setting up a great new apparatus, all the purposes contemplated in a Federation can be completely realized in an expanded American Zionist Council.

And now a personal note in conclusion. One does not help to plant a garden and then walk away from it. A garden requires much tending, watering, weeding and loving care. I plan to remain a faithful gardener. I need a little rest now, but shall always be available. I never sought office. I was summoned six years ago and given an assignment. I thank God that the mission was successfully accomplished. It will remain the deepest satisfaction of my life as I know it will be of yours. I shall, of course, continue to work in the future as I have in the past. I trust that the circumstances will be such as will give my work a congenial atmosphere and a reasonable chance of practical achievement.

You and I have walked these many hard miles together. Together we shall work also in the future as our road now opens upon brighter times and pleasanter places. I give you the pledge of unqualified loyalty and comradeship.

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ADDRESS OF DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER
BEFORE THE Z.O.A. CONVENTION
NEW YORK CITY
MAY 29, 1949

Since we last met in Convention in July 1948, our Movement scored major political victories. The State of Israel was recognized de facto or de jure by more than 50 nations, and on May 11th of this year, was admitted to the United Nations. Israel is now a recognized sovereign and independent nation within the community of the nations of the world. Thus, the primary Zionist objective has been triumphantly achieved.

I shall not here rehearse the events of the past ten months for they are very fresh in your mind. I should like to emphasize here but two facts which are not without guiding significance for the future. What was achieved during the past year was achieved through bitter struggle on the battlefields of Palestine and on the political battlefields here in the United States. The United Nations was unable to implement its recommendations of November 1947. The Jews of Palestine had to implement them with their blood and sacrifices. We are not unmindful or ungrateful for the moral strengthening which the United Nations resolution gave us, and for its assistance during the armistice negotiations. But it is clear that there would have been no armistice in the fighting in Palestine if the Jews of Palestine had not fought and decisively defeated and discomfited the invading armies. It is the people of Israel who established the State of Israel. And it is the people of Israel who, remaining strong and determined, will be the decisive factor in the difficult negotiations which are now going on touching peace treaties, borders, the status of Jerusalem, and the Arab refugee problem.

During the past ten months there were some very dangerous political moments for the new-born State of Israel, especially the one which followed the publication of Count Bernadotte's report. In September, the American government gave its unqualified endorsement to the Bernadotte plan which cut away the Negev or two-thirds of its territory from the State of Israel and isolated the city of Jerusalem from it. A determined effort was made by the representatives of our government and those of Great Britain to rush through an approval of this plan in the General Assembly of the United

Nations meeting in Paris, capitalizing on the public indignation which the assassination of Count Bernadotte had aroused. This was a reversal on the part of our government almost as serious of that of March 19th when it called for the scuttling of the Partition scheme and proffered a trusteeship in its stead. It was necessary for the American Zionist Emergency Council to organize again a large-scale political action on the American scene in order to persuade our government to abandon the position which had been taken by Secretary of State Marshall. This was not at all easy. As so often in the past, our government, both the Executive Branch and the State Department, suddenly became completely non-communicative on the subject. Fortunately, the national elections were not far off, and after much arduous labor we succeeded, on the eve of the national elections, in obtaining a clear statement from both the political candidates, who had long maintained a determined silence on the subject, in opposition to the Bernadotte plan and in favor of the territorial integrity of Israel. Following his election, President Truman carried out the earlier commitment of his administration to give de jure recognition to the State of Israel, as soon as general elections were held in Israel. The Export-Import Bank granted a \$100,000,000 loan to the State of Israel, and the American government this month voted for the admission of Israel into the United Nations.

When the threat of British military intervention in the Palestine war loomed dangerously in January of this year, the Emergency Council was forced to organize another campaign to mobilize American public opinion, and again, when there was the danger of sanctions' being imposed upon Israel by the Security Council in case Israel refused to withdraw its troops from the Negev.

I refer to these matters because they should be guides for the future.

The political backing of our government will be needed by the State of Israel in the future as in the past, particularly in the critical negotiations which are now going on with Arab States. It may be necessary again and again to rally American public opinion in defense of the political rights of Israel. Just as the Israeli are not

free as yet to demobilize because their security has not yet been fully established, so must we not think of demobilizing for some time to come.

There are those who believe that the time has again come to substitute quiet, back-door "shtadlanut" in Washington - the sort of futile and self-deceiving "shtadlanut" which our Movement had to abandon some six years ago - for organized action. I should like to caution against it. The interest of the State of Israel in Washington until peace is fully established must be looked after not only by the official representatives of the State of Israel in Washington who have a competence and authority all of their own and in whose sphere of action we should not meddle, but also by the continued alerted and directed solicitude of organized American Jewry. It is as citizens of the United States that we have the right to be heard, and our representations will be helpful in the future as in the past. It is clear that all such representation should be made by the American Zionist Emergency Council which is an American body speaking for American citizens, and not by the Jewish Agency which is an international body, the propriety of whose intervention might well be challenged.

Certain political circles in Washington who were never too favorable to us have under duress accepted the fact of the existence of the State of Israel. What they want to see now is the liquidation of American Zionism on the American scene so that the organized public opinion which so frequently in the past exercised a restraining influence upon their hostile maneuvers in the State Department would not have to be reckoned with ~~any longer~~ ^{in the future.} They are opposed to what they call Zionist pressure on American foreign policy. Other pressures from oil interests, from missionary educational circles, from Arab or British sources, are by them not considered pressures, and are, therefore, immune from criticism. They want our government to withdraw from all contacts with organized American Zionism.

This trend is not without serious dangers. The State of Israel will be in need of political defense for a long time to come, especially here in the United States, for the attitude of our government will continue to be decisive as far as the political

fortunes of Israel are concerned. Opinion in government circles on all matters relative to the State of Israel has never been of one piece. American Jewish opinion must, therefore, remain organized to defend the legitimate interests of the State of Israel which it helped to bring into existence. There is as yet no stability in Palestine. No peace treaties have been signed. The boundaries of Palestine have not yet been fixed. The status of Jerusalem has not yet been determined. As you know, there is a powerful campaign on for the internationalization of the whole of Jerusalem. The explosive Arab refugee problem has not yet been solved, and it may well plague the situation in the Near East for a long time to come. It is clear that much will yet have to be done in the purely political field to make secure what was achieved with so much effort and sacrifice. The liquidation of organized American Zionist political activities at this time would simply play into the hands of those forces in Washington which have never been friendly to us.

It is for this reason that I have strongly urged the continuation of the American Zionist Emergency Council, and I am pleased that in spite of the initial opposition of ~~the Zionist~~ ^{one party}, affirmative action was taken by all the Zionist parties in the United States.

This brings me to a consideration of the second subject which has agitated Zionist circles during the past year. Hardly was the ink dry upon the proclamation which set up the State of Israel, when a veritable chorus of voices from all directions began to clamor with varying degrees of stridency for the immediate dissolution of the Zionist Organization of America. Some were quick to publish an obituary, pronounce the eulogy, and reach out for the legacy. I am reminded of an item which appeared some years ago in a humorous journal: "As to Prince Kropotkin's denial of his being dead, we deplore his tendency to rush into print without first fully ascertaining the facts."

Former enemies of Zionism - the American Council for Judaism, assimilationists generally, Bundists and journalists who had to swallow the bitter pill of the

establishment of the State of Israel, attempted to compensate themselves for their ~~bit-~~
~~ter~~ frustration by venting their spleen upon the Zionist Movement and by demanding its
immediate extirpation. Joining in this chorus were the spokesmen of some national Jew-
ish organizations who had been elbowed out of the center of Jewish life during the years
of the Zionist triumphant march to victory and who hankered now to get back into a dom-
inant position to which neither their numbers, their achievements nor their representa-
tive character entitled them. Some Zionists, too, added their voices - baritones as
well as sopranos - to this homicidal chorus. Some of them were quite innocent. They
believed that now that the Messiah was come, there was no longer any need for a Zion-
ist Movement. Others were not quite so innocent. Their funeral dirge was chanted only
for the Zionist Organization of America. They did not encompass in their threnody
either the Poale Zion or the Hadassah or the Mizrachi or any of the other parties.

Within a few hours after the establishment of the State, when nearly every
single major political and economic issue was as yet unsettled, the Z.O.A., which had
hardly caught its breath from the colossal political efforts in which it had been en-
gaged, was peremptorily challenged to produce immediately a detailed program for re-
organization, re-orientation and future action, or else to put its head on the block
to be decapitated. When the answer was made that considerable time must elapse before
a great movement can make necessary readjustments to radically changed conditions and
that it should make them only after the implications of such changes have been care-
fully studied, and that furthermore, precipitate action was neither indicated nor judi-
cious, the leaders of the Z.O.A. were broadly denounced as hopelessly obtuse people
who did not grasp that a great revolution has taken place in Jewish life, who did not
have the sense to realize that something new had really occurred, and who were only
concerned with hanging on to positions, power and organizational apparatus.

I did not take this raucous chorus and its banalities quite seriously. I knew
that well-intentioned Zionists who had been misled by the justifiable enthusiasm of the

moment to lose their perspective would very soon regain it. I was confident also that the Zionist Movement as such, as soon as it has had an opportunity officially to express itself on this subject, would overwhelmingly reject this counsel of suicide so generously proffered by so many unsolicited counsellors. This is precisely what the Actions Committee did at its meeting in Jerusalem early this month. As far as the enemies of Zionism are concerned, they wanted our Movement dead a long time ago, but it is they whom history is ^{ignominiously} consigning to the "kevirat hamor".

No nation liquidates its minimum defense forces or closes down its departments of national defense even after victory in a war has been achieved, for it is realized that the idyllic conditions of permanent peace and security exist nowhere in the world.

I have indicated earlier the continuing need for an organized and alerted American Jewry in behalf of protecting politically the new State of Israel, which has certainly not yet passed the broken seas of political dangers into a safe harbor. As far as the economic problems involved in achieving the Zionist goal, that work in a sense has just begun. If Zionism means "kibbutz galuyot", the in-gathering, not necessarily of all the Jews of the world, but certainly of all those who wish to go to Israel or who must go there - and their numbers will reach into the millions - then the year 1948-49 will witness not the consummation of the Zionist ideal in terms of this in-gathering, but only a substantial beginning. It will take years to achieve this goal - many years.

It will require a constant, sustained and costly effort on the part of world Jewry to make this possible. This will have to be done in the face of the growing demands of the local needs of world Jewry outside of Israel for its own cultural, religious, and philanthropic life and institutions, which will claim, and justly so, increasing attention. World Jewry - and that means, by and large, American Jewry - will have to be kept steadfastly organized, educated, inspired for this exacting and long-range program. I know of no body in American Jewry that is better equipped and organ-

ized to perform this historic task, this second phase of our national redemption, than the Zionists who so magnificently helped in the performance of the first task - the creation of the State of Israel.

Non-Zionists, to be sure, will help, even as some non-Zionists helped in the final stages of the political struggle, although some of these non-Zionists choose to forget and would like the world to forget how many obstacles they put in our way during the long, hard years of our struggle, and how much they disrupted and disorganized American Jewry's effort in behalf of the establishment of the Jewish State at a time when the ~~undeterred and unyielding~~ Zionists were struggling to unite American Jewry in its behalf, how many stumbling blocks they put in the way of our political work in Washington, and how much residual mischief has been left in our communities by their former oppositional activities. But the Jewish people will not hold it against them. We welcomed their help in the final phases of our struggle although even then they had to be carefully watched. There was one moment on the very eve of May 14th when these well-intentioned non-Zionists, with the aid of some Zionist leaders who also had to be watched, so glib were they, so accommodating and so unpredictable, had almost succeeded in indefinitely postponing the proclamation of the State of Israel and in substituting a new trusteeship for Palestine which was sponsored by our State Department. We are glad that these American non-Zionists are now receiving their full measure of praise and generous recognition at the hands of the government leaders in Israel who, for reasons of state, of course, seem to be giving priority in their acclaim to American Jews who qualify by reason of their accredited status as non-Zionists and their attributes of wealth.

But while recognizing and welcoming the services and cooperation of all Jews in the economic phase of our work, it would be a serious blunder to entrust the leadership and direction of this work into the hands of those who even at this late hour, when the political objectives of Zionism have been achieved, still prefer to be known as non-Zionists. In the first place, it is not called for by any considerations of

fund-raising. The back-bone of the givers and the workers in our communities in recent UJA campaigns are no longer the non-Zionists. Eastern European Jews have largely taken over everywhere. *certainly not exclusively* By and large *leaders; they are the* they are the givers; they are the workers. And they do not belong to the non-Zionist constellation. The fiction, however, is still kept alive that the success of the campaign depends upon having out in the front on the national level the glamorous name or names of non-Zionists, men of means who themselves need not even set the example of giving, but the sheer magic of whose names automatically inspires others to give. Some of these non-Zionists have been converted quite recently not to Zionism, but to the inevitability of the State of Israel. They wish to have nothing to do with the Zionist organizations or agencies in the United States. They insist upon direct connections with the State of Israel, and there are those in the State of Israel who, for reasons best known to themselves, welcome this direct connection, even though it means the by-passing, and as a result also, the ultimate liquidation of organized Zionism in the United States which has in the past and will alone in the future bear the heat and the brunt of the long, sustained effort in behalf of Israel.

I am afraid that these leaders in Israel are penny-wise and pound-foolish. In a sense, they are not even penny-wise; for the violent imposition of the present leadership upon the UJA against the wishes of large sections of American Zionists will, I am afraid, not net a single additional farthing to the campaign. The campaign of 1949 will net considerably less than that of 1948, and the campaign of 1948, under the same leadership, was far from being a success. Alibis, I am sure, are at hand, and they will be used. But when all is said and done, what purpose was served by this intrusive action of the Agency Executive, and what Zionist objective was advanced by ~~weakening~~ and undermining the position and authority of accredited American Zionist leaders vis-a-vis the non-Zionists and the American Jewish - and for that matter - non-Jewish public generally? What has been gained by weakening the position of the Z.O.A. in the UPA and by depriving the UPA of its very minimal control over the funds

which enabled it to maintain a semblance of autonomy and administrative authority?

A strong Zionist organization with a solid core of tried and experienced Zionists augmented by all such who, as friends of Israel, are, now that the ideological issue has been settled, ready to join, is essential to sustain the long-range interest of American Jewry in the economic needs of Israel to insure that in the coming years, when the Israeli honeymoon period is over, the needs of Israel will not be pushed aside. Now is the time for the Zionist Organization of America to expand and to invite every American Jew to join its ranks. Now is the time to make of every Z.O.A. member a share-holder, an investor - large or small - in Israel. Now is the time for the Z.O.A. through its educational and propaganda channels, to become the transmitter to all American Jews of the needs, the story of the material and cultural accomplishments, and the inspiration of Israel. This should be an era of expansion, not of contraction, for the Zionist Organization of America.

There is yet a third reason for maintaining and strengthening the Zionist Movement in the United States and throughout the world. Zionism^{Jewish} has always stood for a certain definite way of life, not only for the Jewish people in a re-established Jewish State, but also for the Jewish communities throughout the world. It stood for a positive, affirmative Jewish life, of rich cultural content, of deep spiritual values, of a life linked historically with the past and geographically with Jewish communities throughout the world. It was opposed to assimilation or to what is now euphemistically called integration, which means not the eager and active participation in the total life of the countries where Jews are citizens, which Zionists have always advocated, but submergence and self-annihilation. Zionism was always opposed to the definition of Judaism as a church and of Jews as members of a Mosaic persuasion. Translated into concrete terms, the Zionist position meant giving our children a maximal Jewish education, acquainting them with the Hebrew language and literature and with the cultural achievements of their people throughout the ages. It meant a Jewish home wherein the customs, ceremonies and the rich traditions of our millennial life are revered and

exemplified. It meant active participation in the religious life of the synagogue and the support of Jewish scholarship, learning and academies of study. "A return to Judaism," declared Theodor Herzl, "must precede a return to the Jewish land."

I know of no organized group in Jewish life that has so consistently throughout the years worked for this program of positive Jewish life, of Jewish survival and Jewish advance, as that of the Zionists, ~~throughout the world~~. The need for such a body to continue to defend this Jewish way of life will be as great in the future as in the past, if not greater. The establishment of the State of Israel will be seized upon by many Jews as an excuse to assimilate now that they can no longer be accused or need no longer to accuse themselves of cowardice in running away from a homeless and persecuted people. Since the Jewish nation is now secure in Israel, they will argue, they no longer need to remain Jews outside of Israel. There will be other rationalizations offered for assimilation. They will all have this ^{one thing} in common. ~~a~~ denial of the classic concept of a Jewish people which, inside and outside of Israel, is held together by historic, cultural and spiritual ties even though politically it shares no common destiny, and is obligated to no common political allegiance.

I believe that American Zionism should remain organized to meet this challenge because it is best equipped to do so. It should be the catalyst for all elements in Jewish life which are interested in purposeful Jewish survival. It need not duplicate their activities, but it can stimulate, guide and coordinate them. It took us many hard years of struggle to establish the ascendancy of our ideas in the Jewish communities of this country. Let us not lose it now by default.

This brings me to a consideration of yet another matter which has agitated our circles during the past year. While I am interested in the survival and progress of the Zionist Movement the world over, I am not in favor of setting up a monolithic global organization possessed of such unlimited and unqualified authority as to undermine the autonomy of existing Zionist bodies in the countries of the world. There is

Address my answer

an entire range in types of organization, and we need not adopt either the one extreme of complete uncoordinated decentralization, or the other extreme of total, absolutist regimented control which wipes out every vestige of independent thought and action on the part of independent Jewish communities in the world. They simply will not stand for it!

I do not believe in a type of organization which permits the Executive of the Jewish Agency, sitting in New York or in Tel Aviv, to dictate to the Jewish community of the United States or of Canada or of Mexico whom they must appoint as Chairman or as Executive Director of a UPA campaign. I believe that this is unwarranted and impertinent intrusion, and I am persuaded that it will ultimately disrupt and disintegrate the World Zionist Movement as well as the local Zionist bodies.

and my colleague, Dr. Gerson
It was over this issue that I resigned from the Chairmanship of the American Section of the Jewish Agency. Those who have raised the cry of "breach of discipline" have simply begged the question. I am generally suspicious of all those who, in the midst of a controversy involving fundamental issues, raise the cry of discipline or unity or peace. *As a rule they are after something quite different.* ~~There is always some nigger hidden in that vocabulary.~~ I recall that in 1943 when at the American Jewish Conference I urged the adoption of a full-blooded resolution in behalf of the Jewish commonwealth, I was denounced for breaking the unity of American Jewry at a critical time by insisting on something which, after all, was not so very urgent since what was urgent was the opening of the doors of Palestine for Jewish immigration. Well, it was the unity-shouters at that Conference who did not know what they were talking about although they cloaked themselves in the garb of utter respectability and practicability, and cast me in the role of a willful and wild-eyed trouble-maker.

There have been those who attempted to represent the controversy over this issue as an inner Zionist wrangle, and as due to my personal intransigence and intractability. The issue was deliberately distorted by certain individuals and groups who stood to

profit from such a distortion. Some of the same people and groups attempted a few short years ago to misinterpret and distort the position which I and my colleagues took at the Basle Congress, which has since been so completely vindicated. Similarly was the position which I and my colleagues took at the Actions Committee eight months ago on the issue of the formal separation of the Zionist Movement from the State of Israel confounded and misrepresented by the same people. In connection with the present issue, *and was climaxed in a series of articles* a campaign of defamation and character assassination was launched against me by a scribbler ~~named Ehrenreich~~, in one of the Yiddish newspapers, ~~the [illegible]~~, whose columns in recent months have been so filled with enthusiastic pro-Israel material that one might gather the impression that this newspaper had for years huffed and puffed to bring the State of Israel into existence. This series of vituperative articles was inspired and publically approved by the Poale Zion. I am confident that just as our position on the earlier issues has been vindicated, so will our position on the subject of the autonomy of Zionist organizations be completely vindicated before very long.

I was, of course, interested to maintain the full authority of the Jewish Agency. The facts are quite clear. As Chairman of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, I maintained throughout the position that the Jewish Agency should not interfere in the internal affairs of the UPA. The selection of a Chairman for the UPA and the UJA campaign was not a matter which was within the competence of the Executive of the Jewish Agency. At no time in the past did the Jewish Agency intervene in the matter of selecting chairmen for the UPA or a General Chairman for the UJA Campaign. This would have been tantamount to usurping authority which had not been given to the Executive either by the Actions Committee or by any Zionist Congress.

When the controversy developed around Mr. Montor's resignation, and when the Committee of Contributors and Workers, which he sired, brought the matter of the reorganization of the UPA, demanded by them, to the attention of the Jewish Agency, the Committee was informed that the problem concerned the UPA and that all questions con-

cerning the reorganization of the UPA should be directed to the governing body of the UPA. If the UPA desired to consult the Executive of the Jewish Agency on this matter, the Executive would, of course, hold itself in readiness at any time to render any assistance it could. By the unanimous vote of the American Section of the Jewish Agency, the Committee of Contributors and Workers was informed "that the UPA is an autonomous body and the Jewish Agency for Palestine in no way determines its structure or form of organization."

This was the consistent line which I followed throughout and in which the members of the Executive fully concurred. It was under that arrangement that the Executive was able, at the request of the UPA, to work out an agreement with the Committee of Contributors looking to the reorganization of the UPA by the inclusion on its boards of representatives from communities. I personally regarded the reorganization as unnecessary since no community asked for it, and the agitation which Montor started gave the impression to the country that the UPA was a closed corporation controlled by a ~~secret~~ clique and grossly undemocratic, while actually the UPA was far more democratic and more truly representative than the two other organizations comprised in the United Jewish Appeal. But although I did not approve of the move, I accepted the decision of the Executive. I informed the UPA of the opinion of the Executive, and the UPA promptly accepted its recommendation.

It was after the matter of the reorganization of the UPA was satisfactorily disposed of, that some of the members of the Executive of the Jewish Agency, led by Dr. Goldmann, ~~(who has quite a knack for such things)~~ took it upon themselves without any request or authorization from the UPA or, for that matter, without having the subject first discussed at a meeting of the Agency Executive and without even apprizing the Chairman, to negotiate with Mr. Morgenthau and Mr. Montor for resuming their positions in the UJA. I regarded this step as an unwarranted intervention. When later on they

they sought to have the American Section of the Jewish Agency approve a Morgenthau-Montor recommendation to the Board of the UPA, I told them that I regarded it as not within the competence of the Jewish Agency. They nevertheless proceeded to vote such a recommendation to the UPA and the Executive of the UPA promptly turned it down.

Having been rebuffed by the Executive of the UPA, the members of the American Section of the Jewish Agency promptly proceeded to call for reinforcement from the Executive Section in Jerusalem. They requested a plenary session. I did not favor a plenary session. I argued that it was contrary to the interest of the Movement to adopt a procedure which tended to reduce the authority of constituted Zionist bodies in the United States and to destroy their autonomy. I also questioned the competence of even the entire Executive to issue administrative directives to the UPA whose right to conduct campaigns in this country in behalf of the Karen Hayesod and the Jewish National Fund had never been questioned since its inception 24 years ago. I considered resigning from the Agency even before the plenary session met, but I was advised by friends that my action would be misinterpreted as being hasty and as evidence of an unwillingness to sit down and talk over with colleagues a serious issue. I accordingly attended the plenary sessions. From all sides there was pressure for a compromise, a compromise which would bring Morgenthau and Montor ^{back} into the UJA campaign, but would at the same time safeguard at least a measure of the autonomy of the UPA which had been so cavalierly invaded. I requested that the Chairman of the UPA should attend the sessions as well as the chairmen of the Karen Hayesod and Karen Kayemeth, and that they should participate in the discussions.

After protracted discussions a compromise plan was finally adopted unanimously by the Agency Executive in which I concurred, and which acceptable also to the Chairman of the UPA and to the heads of its constituent bodies. This unanimous decision of the Executive which would have resolved the controversy, was rejected out of hand by Mr. Morgenthau who insisted on absolute authority for himself and Mr. Montor to run the campaign. I was then requested by the Executive to confer with Mr. Morgenthau who

was in Florida at the time. I agreed to undertake this trip at great inconvenience to myself in order to make a final effort to reach an agreement, but Mr. Morgenthau declined to meet. In spite of this willful position taken by Mr. Morgenthau, which flaunted the unanimous wish of the Executive of the World Zionist Movement which had spent ^{many} days working out an acceptable formula, the Executive ultimately and abjectly capitulated to his demands. By that time I had had enough - more than enough - and I resigned, and so did my distinguished colleague and President of the Z.O.A., Dr. Emanuel Neumann.

The Executive of the UPA was then asked by the Agency to accept Morgenthau's terms of unconditional surrender. It refused. The Executive of the Jewish Agency then proceeded on its own to sign an agreement with the JDC as well as to announce the incorporation of the Agency in Albany as a membership corporation to function as an independent fund-raising body in the United States. In a similar high-handed manner, Mr. Locker, without a scintilla of authority, convoked a rump session of the Board of Directors of the UPA. When a second meeting of the Board of Directors of the UPA was finally called after these events had taken place, I stated at that meeting: "Because we are thus confronted with a lamentable fait accompli, we have no other ~~re-~~^{course} ~~source~~ but to advise our friends to refrain from voting at the Board meeting. We do not wish further to prolong the controversy; on the other hand, we cannot approve the action which was taken." The composition of the Board ^(not the Executive) of the UPA which, as is well known, was always a facade organization whose membership was in recent years largely hand-picked by Mr. Montor and which never seriously participated in the affairs of the UPA, approved the final action of the Jewish Agency Executive; ^{It also forced out 7} ~~Also by a rump poli-~~ ^{of Mr. Henna Weisman, the acting chairman was 7} ~~tical maneuver, the acting chairman of the UPA was forced out of office and there was~~ ^{was calling on his work most completely and devotedly} ~~substituted for him a gentleman who had but a few days previously been among the most~~ ^{and} ~~violent critics of the contemplated action of the Executive of the Agency. ~~That~~~~ ~~what miracles of conversion and what harmony within an organization the distri-~~ ~~bution of a few offices can accomplish!~~

I know that many factors entered into this controversy. It was aimed against the present administration of the Z.O.A. It was the second phase of the conspiracy which was organized by Mr. Montor in Pittsburgh and whose program was announced in his letter of resignation, whose infamous charges and lies he was compelled finally to retract. Involved also were some Israeli officials who seized the occasion as an opportunity for settling old scores. It was also a heyday for the expansionist hopes of the Poale Zion and their faithful collaborators, Nahum Goldmann and the President of Hadassah. The latter has quite effectively converted the Hadassah into a second women's auxiliary of the Poale Zion ~~and the Mapai~~ without the knowledge, I suspect, of the rank and file of Hadassah.

Such controversies have a way of drawing into themselves a variety of elements, but the one issue remains clear and unmistakable, and it has not yet been resolved. To what extent will the Jewish Agency in the future dominate Zionist bodies the world over? Does it intend also in the future to dictate to Zionist groups in every country whom they shall select as chairmen of their campaigns, or executive directors or other office personnel? And if so, how long will it be before every self-respecting Zionist will abandon these helpless, front organizations, refusing to be mere robots and messenger boys! And how long will it be before the Zionist bodies begin breaking away from the world organization, or go out of business altogether?

The Actions Committee, at its last meeting in Jerusalem, by-passed this issue. The reason given was that no motion on this issue was made. The reason that no motion was made was, of course, due to the fact that the Z.O.A. members of the Actions Committee were prevented from attending the sessions of the Actions Committee because of the refusal of the Executive of the Agency to postpone the sessions of the Actions Committee for a few weeks until after our Convention. This request was made by a unanimous decision of the Executive of the Z.O.A. It is of interest that the members of the Executive in Israel voted almost unanimously to grant the request of the Z.O.A.

It was the members of the American Section led by Nahum Goldmann and the President of Hadassah who, in true comradely spirit, ^{who} voted against it. In the past the wishes even of a small party within the Movement were respected in the matter of setting a convenient date for the sessions of the Actions Committee. In this case the wishes of the largest Zionist body in the world were contemptuously brushed aside! There ^{of course} was no urgent reason why the meeting had to be held "davka" in May and not in June!

One is at a loss also to understand what actually happened there in the matter of our resignations. It appears that it was the Confederation of General Zionists recommended to the Actions Committee that the resignations be which/~~which did not accept the resignations~~ accepted without facing up to the basic issues involved, because it was stated that the General Zionists urgently needed the two places on the Executive which were vacated by us. But it appears that the urgency was not so great, for only one place was filled and the other was left open until the next meeting of the Actions Committee. Furthermore, it appears that the one who was designated to fill the one vacancy was Dr. Yitschak Greenbaum, a very worthy Zionist veteran, to be sure, but one who had withdrawn from the Confederation of General Zionists, and in the recent general elections in Israel, set up a party all of his own because, forsooth, neither of the two General Zionist parties could quite completely satisfy his own particular brand of General Zionist dialectics.

It is clear, however, that while the issue of the autonomy of Zionist bodies was side-tracked at the Actions Committee meeting, it cannot be permanently side-tracked.

I wish to comment on another issue on which in my judgment this Convention should take a position. Not so long ago the Z.O.A. was urged to join the World Confederation of General Zionists. We were told that there were elements in the Yishuv who did not belong to the parties either of the right or of the left, who were neglected and whose interests were ignored; the non-partisan, non-socialist workers, farmers, merchants and professional people. These were seriously disadvantaged by the fact that they had no world organization to look after them in the same way as the

Mapai, the Mapam, the Mizrachi or the Revisionists looked after their followers. Non-party Jews who were arriving in Israel from the D.P. camps and elsewhere had no organization to look after their reception, care and adjustment in the same manner as other immigrants who belonged to these parties. Disturbing reports of grave discrimination and favoritism reached us. The General Zionists throughout the world who traditionally represented the national idea as against the narrower partisan class interests were urged to organize more effectively, and the Z.O.A. was persuaded to join the ranks of the Confederation of General Zionists. I favored the move, and at the time of the Basle Congress, I participated in the reorganization of the Confederation and in the further working out of its program. It was clear from the very outset that within the ranks of the General Zionists there were, as of necessity there would be, various points of view, not only on political matters, but also on economic matters. There were those among the General Zionists who at the Congress favored partition and those who opposed it. We did not permit that issue to split the Confederation. The delegates were given freedom to vote according to the dictates of their conscience. There were also conservatives as well as liberals within the Confederation - those who were more New Deal-ish than others. But we believed that there was room for all of them within the framework of General Zionism which declared in its platform adopted in 1946 that it stands for the strengthening of national unity in the face of separatist tendencies from the right and from the left; for the maintenance of national equilibrium in spite of political, social and cultural divisions; for national unity and national discipline; for the highest forms of social progress, of true democracy and personal freedom; for the development of private initiative, industry, handicrafts, trade, agriculture and the professions; ⁵⁴ for the establishment of a unified school system under national control; in such a way that party machinery shall be excluded from education, sport and other similar activities; and for a fair and equal treatment of all immigrants who shall benefit from the assistance and support of the institutions of the Jewish Agency without discrimination.

Here we thought was a program broad enough for progressive and conservatives alike *within General Zionism*.

But last August the General Zionist party in Palestine split wide open. A group of so-called Progressives broke away from the main body and established itself as an independent political party. Automatically all those who did not secede were branded as reactionary. One must use a very powerful microscope indeed to discover the subtle nuances which distinguish one General Zionist party in Israel from the other. When we were in Israel last August, we strongly deprecated the split in the ranks of the General Zionists and we urged them to get together. At best, they represented a minority party in the country. A division in their ranks meant consigning both of them to utter political futility. We were not the champions of one group as against the other. We strongly urged their re-integration, confident that together, in the course of time, they would come to represent a strong force in the political and economic life of the country, a force for moderation and a balance wheel. At the time I warned them that the split in the ranks of the General Zionists in Israel would result before long in a split in every organization of General Zionists throughout the world. My advice was ignored. In the general elections of last January, as might well have been anticipated, both General Zionist parties received relatively few votes. The seceding so-called Progressive Party received less votes than the older group. Today they constitute two ineffective splinter parties - one inside the governmental coalition and one outside.

As I forewarned, the split in Israel was soon reflected in controversies and threatened splits in General Zionist groups all over the world. It was also reflected in our Z.O.A. Members of the Z.O.A. were soon asked to take sides as between the so-called progressive and reactionary General Zionist parties in Israel. American Zionist leaders who were not prepared to align themselves with the *seceding* so-called progressive group in Israel and who refused to denounce the men and women who make up the old General Zionist group in Israel - worthy men and women whom we would be proud to have as

members in ^{our} ~~the~~ Z.O.A. - were suddenly pilloried as reactionaries and as enemies of the government of Israel. I was quite amused to see how the small opposition group within the Z.O.A., which included along with a ^{number} ~~number~~ of liberals, some very fine old political and economic Tories - plutocrats, brokers, bankers and speculators - suddenly wrapped ^{an} ~~itself~~ up in ^{while it ed} ~~the~~ all-blue Talit of Israeli progressivism ^{after} ~~and~~ consign all others to damnation and outer darkness.

In my judgment the Confederation of General Zionists, as it is presently constituted, is an anomaly - nay, an absurdity, and our organization only ham-strings itself by continuing to work through it. One Confederation representing two opposing political parties is a grotesquerie. Our identification with it threatens to disrupt our own organization. The Z.O.A. should on its own and independently carry on constructive Zionist activities and projects in Israel. We should not be compelled to choose sides in a controversy which seems to be inspired by abnormal partisan egoism and personality incompatibilities. When the General Zionists in Israel will have submerged their differences and united for effective action, the Zionist Organization of America should then reconsider the extent and the manner of its future cooperation with them.

The Z.O.A. has never been reactionary or anti-labor. The record of the years is there. It is open for anyone to read. But the Z.O.A. has never identified itself with the Socialist program or any Socialist party in Israel, and for good and sufficient reasons. In the same way, the Z.O.A. has never been opposed to religion or the religious interests in Israel. Quite the contrary. But it has never identified itself with the Mizrachi or any other religious party in Israel, and likewise, for good and sufficient reasons. In neither instance has it been oppositional, but it has consistently adhered to its own central national idea for a Jewish State for all Jews and for fair opportunity and freedom for all groups. The Z.O.A. has urged public funds for public projects. It understood full well that the upbuilding of the country would be impossible without a large measure of ~~collective and~~ cooperative economic

activities, and without a large measure of governmental participation and governmental control. But it also understood the necessity for private capital and private investments. Israel has no vast natural resources which could be collectively exploited to build up the economic life of the country at a pace capable of absorbing a vast immigration. It realized that much private capital would have to be imported - nay, coaxed into the country, and that this would be possible only if private investments were given a sense of security from unfair discrimination and harrassment. Private capital which is so desperately needed in Israel today will not be coaxed into the country when one set of government officials promises it security in law and welcome concessions, while at the same time another set of government officials of equal or greater authority speaks of establishing Socialism in Israel in our time. A strong General Zionist party in Israel would heighten the confidence of those who are being invited to invest their money in the economic life of the country. As such, a strong General Zionist party would contribute vitally to the successful implementation of the second phase of our Zionist program, the "kibbutz galuyot" phase.

The question is then one of degree and of tempo, not of progress or reaction.

The cry has been raised in certain quarters that American Zionist leaders are trying to influence and dominate the economic and social structure of Israel. It is of interest to note that those who have raised this ^{cry} ~~howl~~ against the putative interference of American Zionist leaders have themselves been carrying on a very active *and open* propaganda and a large-scale financial campaign in the United States to strengthen their favorite political party and its Socialist program in Israel. Quite recently they created a new organization, composed of both Jews and non-Jews in the United States, whose purpose will be to give moral and financial support to the ^{Labor} ~~Mapai~~ party in Israel. The formula seems to be that if you are prepared to back up the ^{Labor} ~~Mapai~~ party, you are not interfering in the internal affairs in Israel, but if, "has ve-halila", you wish to back up any other group in Israel, you are an impudent meddler, as well as an enemy of the government of Israel.

The government of Israel today is a coalition government. The Z.O.A., in whatever projects it sets for itself in Israel, will naturally cooperate with this government or with any other government which may be set up in the future. It cannot work in a vacuum. The Z.O.A. does not look upon the present government of Israel as hostile to it, nor does it regard itself as in any way hostile to the present government of Israel. From this it does not follow, however, that the Z.O.A. is committed to the party platform of the Mapai or that of any other party in the present coalition. It is conceivable that tomorrow ^{some other party} the Mapam may be the major party in a new coalition. That would not obligate the Z.O.A. to subscribe to the program of ^{this other party} the Mapam, although it would obligate the Z.O.A. to continue to work in Israel in the friendliest possible cooperation with the then-existing government.

Finally, let me say that I am strongly in favor of a Federation of all Zionist bodies in the United States for the effective implementation of those programs which are common to them all. Such a federation was planned by the last Zionist Congress. The liquidation of the present Zionist groupings and their merger into one is presently not feasible. Within such a federation the various parties should be represented on the basis of their numerical strength. There is no formula available in a democracy by which a minority can through some leger-de-main convert itself into a majority. An effort will be made when this Federation proposal comes to be discussed on the part of one or another party to use the shekel as a basis for representation. Knowing what you know of the manner in which the shekel was distributed and how improperly it reflects the real strength of the existing Zionist bodies in the United States, you will, I am sure, not be taken in by that maneuver.

In my own judgment the American Zionist Emergency Council, which has since been re-organized and whose name has been changed to the American Zionist Council, may well become this contemplated Federation. In the American Zionist Council all the parties have for years worked successfully together in the very important and difficult field of political action. The Council has through the years built up an excellent apparatus, accumulated a vast experience, and established its prestige and

authority on the American scene. The American Zionist Council may now be expanded to embrace other activities which are common to all the parties, and a satisfactory scheme of representation can, I believe, be worked out. Thus, without much ^{ado} ~~ad~~, without much controversy and without the need of setting up a great new apparatus, all the purposes contemplated in a Federation can be completely realized in an expanded American Zionist Council.

And now a personal note in conclusion. One does not help to plant a garden and then walk away from it. A garden requires much tending, watering, weeding and loving care. I plan to remain a faithful gardener. I need a little rest now, but I shall always be available. I never sought office. I was summoned six years ago and given an assignment. I thank God that the mission was ^{successfully} accomplished. It will remain the deepest satisfaction of my life as I know it will be of yours. I shall, of course, continue to work in the future as I have in the past. I trust that the circumstances will be such as will give my work a congenial atmosphere and a reasonable change of practical achievement.

^{You and I} ~~We~~ have walked these many hard miles together. Together we shall walk also in the future as our road now opens upon brighter times and pleasanter places. I give you the pledge of unqualified loyalty and comradeship.

STATE AND ZIONIST ORGANISATION

49-11 (1.) Council of Suicide

by DR. ABBA HILLEL SILVER

Jewish
Standard
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WHEN the threat of British military intervention in the Palestine war loomed dangerously in January of this year, the American Zionist Emergency Council was forced to organise another campaign to mobilise American public opinion, and again, when there was the danger of sanctions being imposed upon Israel by the Security Council in case Israel refused to withdraw its troops from the Negev.

I refer to these matters because they should be guides for the future. The political backing of our government will be needed by the State of Israel in the future as in the past, particularly in the critical negotiations which are now going on with Arab States. It may be necessary again and again to rally American public opinion in defence of the political rights of Israel. Just as the Israelis are not free as yet to demobilise because their security has not yet been fully established, so must we not think of demobilising for some time to come.

A Vote of Caution

There are those who believe that the time has again come to substitute quiet back-door "shtadlanut" in Washington — the sort of futile and self-deceiving "shtadlanut" which our Movement had to abandon some six years ago—for organised action. I should like to caution against it. The interest of the State of Israel in Washington until peace is fully established must be looked after not only by the official representatives of the State of Israel in Washington who have a competence and authority all of their own and in whose sphere of action we should not meddle, but also by the continued alerted and directed solicitude of organised American Jewry.

It is as citizens of the United States that we have the right to be heard, and our representations will be helpful in the future as in the past. It is clear that all such representation should be made by the American Zionist Emergency Council which is an American body speaking for American citizens, and not by the Jewish Agency which is an international body, the propriety of whose intervention might well be challenged.

Certain political circles in Washington who were never too favourable to us have under duress accepted the fact of the existence of the State of Israel. What they want to see now is the liquidation of American Zionism on the American scene so that the organised public opinion which so frequently in the past exercised a restraining influence upon their hostile manoeuvres in the State Department would not have to be reckoned with in the future. They are opposed to what they call Zionist pressure on American foreign policy. Other pressures from oil interests, from missionary educational circles, from Arab or British sources, are by them not considered pressures, and are, therefore, immune from criticism. They want our government to withdraw from all contacts with organised American Zionism.

Political Defence

This trend is not without serious dangers. The State of Israel will be in need of political defence for a long time to come, especially here in the United States, for the attitude of our government will continue to be decisive as far as the political fortunes of Israel are concerned. Opinion in government circles on all matters relative to the State



THIS is the first of four extracts from Dr. Silver's programmatic speech to the recent Annual Convention of the Zionist Organisation of America. In his speech, after dealing with the rôle of the Zionist Organisation in the future, Dr. Silver discussed relationships between Zionists and non-Zionists, the so-called "Monitor Controversy", and, finally, the position of General Zionism. In subsequent issues we shall be reproducing other extracts from this speech.

of Israel has never been of one piece. American Jewish opinion must, therefore, remain organised to defend the legitimate interests of the State of Israel which it helped to bring into existence. There is as yet no stability in Palestine. No peace treaties have been signed. The boundaries of Palestine have not yet been fixed. The status of Jerusalem has not yet been determined. There is a powerful campaign on for the internationalisation of the whole of Jerusalem. The explosive Arab refugee problem has not yet been solved, and it may well plague the situation in the Near East for a long time to come.

It is clear that much will yet have to be done in the purely political field to make secure what was achieved with so much effort and sacrifice. The liquidation of organized American Zionist political

activities at this time would simply play into the hands of those forces in Washington which have never been friendly to us. It is for this reason that I have strongly urged the continuation of the American Zionist Emergency Council, and I am pleased that in spite of the initial opposition of one party, affirmative action was taken by all the Zionist parties in the United States. ...This brings me to a consideration of the second subject which has agitated Zionist circles during the past year. Hardly was the ink dry upon the proclamation which set up the State of Israel, when a veritable chorus of voices from all directions began to clamour with varying degrees of stridency for the immediate dissolution of the Zionist Organisation of America. Some were quick to publish an obituary, pronounce the eulogy, and reach out for the legacy. I am reminded of an item which appeared some years ago in a humorous journal: "As to Prince Kropotkin's denial of his being dead, we deplore his tendency to rush into print without first fully ascertaining the facts."

The Homicidal Chorus

Former enemies of Zionism — the American Council for Judaism, assimilationists generally, Bundists and journalists who had to swallow the bitter pill of the establishment of the State of Israel, attempted to compensate themselves for their frustration by venting their spleen upon the Zionist Movement and by demanding its immediate extirpation. Joining in this chorus were the spokesmen of some national Jewish organisations who have been elbowed out of the centre of Jewish life during the years of the Zionist triumphant march to victory and who hankered now to get back into a dominant position to which neither their numbers, their achievements nor their representative character entitled them.

Some Zionists, too, added their voices — baritones as well as sopranos — to this homicidal chorus. Some of them were quite innocent. They believed that now that the Messiah was come, there was no longer any need for a Zionist Movement. Others were not quite so innocent. Their funeral dirge was chanted

(Continued page 11, col. 4)