

Editor's Note

Following are the majority and minority resolutions considered by the Second World Conference of the Jewish Labor Bund, held in N.Y. in October, representing Bund organizations in 18 countries.

These resolutions are published in this Bulletin at the initiative of Comrade Ed Findley. More exactly, Comrade Findley submitted the Minority resolution for such publication, but because of the shortness of both documents, we are including both. It should be understood that they are here considered only as discussion articles which may be of interest.

Comrade Findley's note follows:

"The following statement is submitted as a contribution to the pre-convention discussion of the Palestine and Jewish questions. It is felt that this "Minority Proposal", originally submitted to the Second World Conference of the Bund and Affiliated Jewish Socialist Organizations (NY, October 1948) is a lucid formulation of important aspects of the questions.

As my own views coincide fairly closely with the general lines of this proposal I feel justified in submitting it to the WP Bulletin for publication.

Ed Findley"

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ON THE JEWISH QUESTION: RESOLUTIONS OF THE BUND

The Jews in the World and the Tasks Ahead (statement adopted by the Second World Conference of the "BUND")

The Second World Conference of the BUND reaffirms its approval of the previous statements on Jewish problems, viz., the statement adopted by the Executive Session of the World Coordinating Committee in June, 1948.

The Conference considers, as before, the following as the basic principles of Bundist activities:

(a) The Jewish people is and will remain a people of the world, with nine-tenths of it dwelling outside Palestine;

(b) The State of Israel, being a result of an artificial partition of Palestine and being established by a bloody struggle among Jews and Arabs, is not only far from solving the Jewish problem all over the world; but also carries grave dangers for the great and important accomplishments of the Jewish community in Palestine, even for its very physical existence.

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The Conference therefore re-states the belief that now, as before, the most important task and the most pressing duty of the Bundist organization is to carry on the struggle for the national and social deliverance of the Jewish popular masses in the countries where they dwell; this struggle should be waged together with the Socialist and democratic forces of the particular countries and by concentrating around the Bundist organizations all Jewish vitalizing forces truthfully striving to defend the existence and the free development of our people all over the world.

As formulated at the First World Conference of the BUND, the fight against fascism, reactionary and totalitarian forces, the danger of a new war, and for democracy, Socialism and international peace; the fight against anti-Semitism; the fight for the abolishment of the Displaced Person camps and for free immigration laws devoid of national and similar discriminatory clauses; the struggle for economic reconstruction and a decent standard of living for Jewish workers; the fight against assimilation and for the free development, strengthening, and popularization of Yiddish culture; the fight for the rights of the Yiddish language and for its use in public and private life; the struggle for the establishment of normal basic schools with Yiddish as the language of instruction; the fight for democratic Jewish community councils and other Jewish autonomous bodies; the fight for secularity in Jewish life, for social aid for the victims of totalitarian regimes of all forms, and similar issues - remain, as before, of vital importance to the masses of the Jewish people and their vanguard, the BUND. On these issues must be concentrated the efforts of our comrades and of our organizations all over the world.

The very same course of action applies to Palestine. Jewish Socialists and democrats, wherever they may be must not limit themselves to a negative attitude toward the State of Israel. They should strive to remove the dangers created by the Jewish state and work for peace with the surrounding Arab states and for collaboration with the Palestinian Arab population on the basis of free national development of both nationalities, insured by real United Nations guarantees and by the establishment of a common Jewish-Arab state constructed on the principles of democratic federalism.

At the same time it is important for the physical and spiritual existence of our people, both in Palestine and outside its boundaries, that the Palestinian community do not detach itself from the remainder of the Jewish people and do not become a tribe or a people of its own. The relationship of the various parts of our people all over the world should be kept up and strengthened as much as only possible. The Yiddish language should be taught in the State of Israel; that language should enjoy full rights and privileges in the Israel schools and in public life.

Thus concentrating all its energies upon the constructive struggle for satisfying the real needs of the Jewish working masses, the BUND shall continue to play the vital and leading part in Jewish life which it had played during its glorious past.

Minority Proposal

As a result of a thorough debate regarding the state of Jews in the world, the Second World Conference of the BUND maintains:

1. The Jews were and shall remain a people of the world; the Jewish problem always was, is now, and will remain a world problem, and as such it can be solved only in a world scale: it is possible to remove radically all injustices practiced against the Jews when and only when the world shall be reconstructed on a Socialist basis;

2. Owing to the war destruction and continual emigration, the Palestinian Jewish community grew both in numbers and in its relative importance in Jewish life; the 700,000 Jews, whose national consciousness and whose organization are strong, now represent a most important part of the Jewish people;

3. The British administrative authorities did not, unfortunately remain neutral throughout the last period of their rule in Palestine and, in flagrant reversal of promises given, supported the Arab faction against the Jews with funds, weapons, and military leaders; after the liquidation of British rule under the mandate, the Palestinian Jewish community had no choice - Jewish-Arab relations being in a state of considerable tension - but to organize itself into an independent state unit; under the circumstances only such action enabled the Jewish community in Palestine to fight off the attack of foreign Arab armies, which are led by and serve the interests of pro-Nazi feudal groups politically dominating the lives of the Arabs.

4. The Jewish masses all over the world should incessantly be warned not to fall prey to illusions that the establishment of the State of Israel solves the Jewish problem on a world scale.

5. The establishment of the State of Israel is but a palliative solution even as far as the Jewish population in Palestine is concerned. The peace, the security, the economic existence, and the political future of the Jewish population in Palestine can be permanently assured only as a result of a Jewish-Arab understanding in the country and of a Socialist victory in the world; the Jewish population in Palestine should strive to arrive at a direct understanding with the Arab as soon as only possible - and understanding which should lead to a future voluntary federation or to the establishment of a bi-national state; the Jewish community in the State of Israel cannot build its future upon the uncertain foundation of narrow-minded nationalism and chauvinism not only because such a course would be antidemocratic, but also because it would be in direct contradiction to the practical interests of the Jewish community, which is now and will at best remain a small island closely surrounded by Arab areas.

6. Regardless of the political status of the Jews in the State of Israel, the closest relations must be established between the Israel Jews and the Jews outside Palestine. Yet this rapprochement must never occur on the basis of the greatly harmful and wholly illusory view of the political Zionists who consider the so-called Diaspora merely as a reservoir of manpower and material aid for a future expansion of the State of Israel both at the expense of the surrounding Arab countries and in the sense of the eventual liquidation of the Jewish settlements outside Palestine;

7. A cultural rapprochement between the Jews the world over and the Jewish community in the State of Israel will be effectively achieved only after the Zionists will destroy the mental barriers which they have built up over a number of years between Palestinian Jews and those outside Palestine. The Yiddish language, spoken by great masses of Jews at the present time, should be granted full rights in the public life of the Palestinian community.

8. We deem it our duty to oppose the Zionist monopolistic tendency to mobilize all and everything for the State of Israel; this course must be opposed by us as harmful to the existence of the Jews in the countries where they dwell. Even the Jewish community in the State of Israel will feel secure only when world Socialism will emerge victorious over the forces of capitalism.

9. The great majority of the Jews dwell and will continue to dwell in the countries of their present domicile. Thus the BUND should dedicate its forces to the struggle of the Jewish masses for their national and social rights, for the existence of the Jews as a people, based upon modern Jewish culture and Jewish autonomous life. This was and remains the historic mission of our party.