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# JEWISH UNITY FOR VICTORY

By

ALEXANDER BITTELMAN




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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE STRUGGLE for Jewish unity in America stems directly from the needs of the war against fascism. It is conditioned by these needs and derives its main strength from the determination of the American Jews to do everything necessary to help America win the war, to hasten the victory of the United Nations, to make their greatest contribution to the destruction of fascism.

This does not mean that the question of Jewish unity for victory is so understood by all Jews or even by all those who are actively supporting the struggle for Jewish unity. There are forces among American Jews who see clearly the aims of Jewish unity. And these are precisely the forces that are fighting most consistently for it. Others do not see the matter as clearly and therefore demonstrate less consistency in the struggle for the achievement of all-inclusive Jewish unity for victory as part of the national unity of the American people. Still others, even though a small fraction of American Jewry, violently oppose and obstruct the achievement of full Jewish unity. Nevertheless the logic of the war and the needs of the Jewish people are forcing the crystallization in the United States of a strong Jewish unity for victory. And in the measure in which this is achieved the entire front of national unity of the American people in support of the Commander-in-Chief is gaining immeasurably.

At this hour there is no need of proving that in this war there is at stake the very physical existence of large sections of the Jewish people all over the world. Moreover, in the longer run, the question of victory in this war is literally the question of the existence of the Jewish people everywhere. Consequently the task of shortening the war and of hastening victory, which is today the major question for all freedom-loving peoples, is

particularly crucial for the Jewish people. Every passing day sees the physical annihilation of large numbers of Jews in the Hitler-occupied territories. It is for this reason that the struggle for Jewish unity is fundamentally a struggle for helping to hasten victory, is a struggle to help save the Jewish people from physical annihilation.

Unfortunately, this fundamental truth is not yet the common property of all those forces in Jewish life which support and fight for Jewish unity. Many responsible and authoritative Jewish leaders in the United States still continue to draw a line of separation between the task of saving the Jewish people from destruction by Hitlerism and the so-called "other" task of helping to win the war. The American Jewish Conference, held in New York City August 29-September 1, 1943, which represented a relatively high degree of unity among American Jews, and which created an Interim Committee to carry forward the work of the Conference, has demonstrated this fundamental weakness. It has not made the winning of the war and the Jewish contribution to victory its central and major theme, although these tasks did influence and condition the deliberations of the Conference.

The Conference took place at a time when the possibilities for winning the war this year were exceptionally good; while the menace to the physical existence of large sections of Jews in Hitler-occupied territories was never as great. Under these circumstances, it was the most natural thing to expect that the Conference would make the central point of its deliberations precisely the question of what the American Jews can contribute to the American national unity for hastening victory over Hitler. It should have urged, as do large numbers of Americans, the immediate opening of a second front and the strengthening of the anti-Hitler coalition. It should have done so not only on patriotic grounds, but also because it was so much concerned, and justly so, with the fate of the Jewish captives of Hitler and with a burning desire to do something to help save them.

This latter question occupied very much of the attention



of the Conference, and a program of immediate action was adopted, looking toward saving as many Jews as possible in the European countries from Hitlerism. Which is all to the good. But the main question was not tackled—the question of hastening victory, of unifying and increasing the contributions of American Jewry to victory.

The emergence of the American Jewish Conference was and is an important event in the life of the American Jews as well as in the life of the American people as a whole. The Conference undoubtedly represents an important and significant step, one more step, on the road to Jewish unity for victory. And the fact that the Conference has elected an Interim Committee to carry out its resolutions, to continue its work and to prepare for a second session of the Conference within the next twelve months—all these things offer certain guarantees that the movement for Jewish unity and its effectiveness will increase. Yet the fact remains that the American Jewish Conference has not yet become the leading center and unifying force for American Jews in their efforts to make their contribution to American national unity and to victory in the war.

This can be seen also from another fact of importance. The Conference was naturally very much concerned with the growing menace of anti-Semitism. It understood full well that anti-Semitism is a menace not only to the Jews but to the American people as a whole. It knew, even though it didn't say so clearly enough, that anti-Semitism is one of the main weapons of the defeatists and appeasers and pro-fascists. In these circumstances, it might have been expected that the Conference would assume the initiative in mobilizing the American Jews, in unity with all patriotic Americans, in a struggle against anti-Semitism in the United States. Unfortunately this was not done. And this is today another serious weakness of the unity movement among the Jews in the United States.

True, the Conference did adopt a declaration against anti-Semitism and pledged itself to work for the outlawing of anti-Semitism all over the world after the war. Which is good as far as it goes. But here again we see the peculiar separation of

so-called post-war aims from the immediate practical tasks of winning the war, of fighting for national unity and hence of fighting against anti-Semitism now and for doing so precisely as a means of strengthening the capacity of the American people for winning the war and for hastening victory.

It is being maintained in certain quarters that the main trouble with the American Jewish Conference is its preoccupation with Palestine and its domination by Zionists. This contention is being exploited by the enemies of Jewish unity to oppose the movement for Jewish unity itself and to obstruct the Conference. The truth of the matter is that this preoccupation of the Conference with the Jewish Yishuv\* in Palestine and the leading role of Zionists in the Conference are by no means incompatible with the achievement of full and all-inclusive Jewish unity for victory over fascism. The trouble with the Conference was not its interest in the affairs and future of the Yishuv in Palestine but its failure to adopt a program on the question which could be supported by all American Jews, Zionists and non-Zionists alike.

Such a program exists in the attitude of the overwhelming majority of American Jews. It is the attitude of supporting the Palestine Jews in their just demands for larger and more effective participation on the battlefields against the common enemy and for a more effective mobilization of all the economic and industrial resources of the Yishuv for the purposes of helping to win the war. It is the attitude which is ready to help the Palestinian Jews to build and develop their community, in friendship and collaboration with the Arabs, as a free and organized national community.

Here again, the Conference was inclined to concentrate on post-war relationships *in isolation from the present and most burning needs of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine.*

The coming into existence of the American Jewish Conference and of the Interim Committee created by it has introduced a new factor of great importance in American Jewish life. An organ has been created through which all-inclusive

\* The Jewish community in Palestine.

Jewish unity against fascism can be developed and eventually achieved. An organized Jewish body has come into life which speaks in the name of the American Jews with considerable authority and which is recognized as the Jewish spokesman by large numbers of American Jews. Yet the fact remains that Jewish labor, especially the Jewish workers organized in trade unions, are not yet represented in the American Jewish Conference to any adequate degree.

The Labor Zionists undoubtedly represent a certain section of the Jewish workers in America. But it is very insignificant in numbers. It would therefore be absurd to claim that the presence of the Labor Zionists at the Conference assures representation to Jewish labor. It would be equally absurd to insist, as some do, that the presence at the Conference of a delegation from the Jewish Labor Committee brought the Jewish workers into the Conference.

This we say on two grounds. First, because the Jewish Labor Committee, dominated as it is by the anti-unity forces grouped around the *Jewish Daily Forward*, does not express the attitudes and positions of the broad masses of Jewish labor in the United States. The Jewish Labor Committee went to the Conference reluctantly, after it had tried to prevent the coming of the Conference into existence, pushed by the pressure of the masses from below. And it went into the Conference with the evident intention of sabotaging and destroying it from within as well as from without. Second, the Jewish Labor Committee agreed to participate in the Conference only in limited numbers, in the capacity of observers, more or less, and without assuming any responsibility for the work and future of the Conference. The Jewish Labor Committee imposed upon its affiliates the policy of boycotting the local elections to the Conference, which were the chief means of insuring direct representation at the Conference *to wide masses*. The result of this policy was to exclude from participation at the Conference the bulk of the Jewish workers whose organizations are affiliated to the Jewish Labor Committee.

But this is not all. Within the electoral machinery of the

Conference itself, there was operating another group of anti-unity forces, the group represented by the Zionist leader Louis Lipsky and by such Labor Zionists as Segal and Greenberg. This group made full use of its positions in the electoral machinery of the Conference to exclude from it large numbers of Jewish labor and people's organizations which are not affiliated to the Jewish Labor Committee and which have demonstrated, through a period of time, their consistency and devotion to the cause of Jewish people's unity for victory. Among these are such known Jewish anti-fascist organizations as the Jewish People's Committee, to which are affiliated important trade unions embracing large numbers of Jewish workers (the International Furriers' Union and many others). Among these organizations is the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order and a large number of Jewish cultural and people's organizations.

Thus Jewish labor was practically kept out of the Conference by the combined efforts of the anti-unity forces in the Jewish Labor Committee and among the Zionists and Labor Zionists.

This constitutes the fundamental weakness of the Conference to date. Most of its other weaknesses, discussed above, derive primarily from the fact that the voice of Jewish labor, especially of the most consistent adherents of unity and of the best fighters against fascism and for winning the war, was not heard at this Conference.

No wonder, therefore, that there exists now a certain skepticism or even pessimism in certain circles regarding the future of the American Jewish Conference. People are asking whether this Conference, great and important as was its assembly, will really become the leader of a united American Jewry in this crucial hour in the life of the Jewish people. Moreover, taking advantage of these moods of skepticism, the enemies of Jewish unity inside and outside of the Conference, identified with the *Jewish Forward* and the Lipsky-Segal Zionists, are again resuming their sabotage of united Jewish actions. It has been anticipated for some time past that the Jewish Labor Com-

mittee, together with the reactionary and anti-national elements in the American Jewish Committee, may decide to break away from the Conference altogether.

Unfortunately some of these anticipations are already becoming realized. The American Jewish Committee has withdrawn from the American Jewish Conference, doubtless under the pressure of its reactionary and anti-national elements. It is also believed that the Jewish Labor Committee, whether it formally withdraws from the American Jewish Conference or remains nominally affiliated to it, will in effect be outside of it for all practical purposes, using its inside connections, as usual, to sabotage and hurt the work of the Conference.

And so, it is freely speculated in the *Jewish Daily Forward* circles that the American Jewish Conference will have no future and that nothing will materialize from the high hopes associated with it in the minds of millions of American Jews.

It must be said, however, in all objectivity, that while the American Jewish Conference is facing real dangers which threaten the cause of Jewish unity against fascism, there are at the same time real possibilities for the American Jewish Conference and its Interim Committee to develop into an effective leader of a united American Jewry for victory, for the destruction of fascism and for a happy future for the Jewish people together with all freedom-loving peoples. But this will not happen by itself. It will occur in the measure in which the Interim Committee undertakes to function *in the day-to-day life of the American Jews*, which means in the day-to-day efforts to help win the war.

That is why the consistent Jewish anti-fascists in the United States, among them the Jewish Communists, have adopted the position that the Jewish people of the United States should actively support the Interim Committee of the American Jewish Conference in every effort to serve the interests of the Jewish people. At the same time, it is clearly realized in these same circles that it requires considerable public pressure by the Jewish masses to encourage the Interim Committee to really begin functioning in this way. In other words, the policy

followed by the consistent Jewish anti-fascists is to work among the masses of the Jewish people in the United States, to organize them for active support to the Conference in all actions in favor of winning the war and of increasing the Jewish contribution to victory, and to do so by rallying the maximum possible united Jewish mass pressure upon the Interim Committee and the American Jewish Conference for the purpose of achieving real and all-inclusive Jewish unity against fascism.

This means that the Interim Committee must be helped to find a way of enabling the Jewish trade unionists and such important Jewish organizations as the Jewish People's Committee and the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order to collaborate with the Interim Committee and to become part of the American Jewish Conference. This means furthermore that the Interim Committee must be helped to really assume the initiative of uniting and further mobilizing the Jewish contribution to victory, for hastening victory by the immediate opening of a second front, for carrying out energetically the program of immediate rescue of the European Jews which the American Jewish Conference has adopted.

It means, furthermore, that the Interim Committee must also assume the initiative for approaching non-Jewish organizations for an intensive national campaign against anti-Semitism, for the passage of the Lynch and Dickstein Bills in Congress, for a Federal act to outlaw anti-Semitism, for the abolition of every form of racial discrimination and persecution.

It means also that the Interim Committee must immediately take steps to establish contact with the Soviet Jews, with the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow, for common efforts to win the war and in defense of the interests of the Jewish people after the war. Finally, it is certainly to be expected that the Interim Committee of the American Jewish Conference would take steps to win the support of American public opinion for the demands of the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine; namely, for the abolition of the so-called White Paper of the British Government, which closes the door to Jewish immigration to Palestine, and for granting the Jewish

Yishuv broader opportunity to participate in the war on the battlefields as an organized and free Jewish community and to develop further the war industries and agriculture of Palestine.

Only in this manner will the American Jewish Conference become in fact the leader of a united Jewry against fascism and thus a great force for strengthening American national unity for victory around the Commander-in-Chief.

This is a perfectly realistic policy and program, and for the reason that it is already supported by the overwhelming majority of American Jews, which is demonstrated daily in every field of Jewish activity. This is a fact which nobody dares dispute, although many Jewish leaders still continue to ignore it.

Our view of the real attitude of the Jewish people in the United States on the question of unity and the role of the American Jewish Conference has been convincingly confirmed by a number of developments which took place immediately prior to the opening of the Conference, during its sessions and immediately after its adjournment. For example, the petition campaign carried on by the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order and by the Jewish People's Committee, calling upon the Conference to adopt a policy of all-inclusive Jewish unity against fascism, was signed by over 90,000 Jewish men and women, most of them workers, trade unionists, and also many middle class Jews. These are the voices and demands of the most active and consistently anti-fascist section of American Jewry.

Secondly, on the day of the opening of the Conference, about two hundred prominent Jewish trade union leaders addressed an Open Letter to the American Jewish Conference, calling upon it to find ways and means of incorporating Jewish trade unionists and Jewish labor generally into its work and to adopt a program of active struggle against fascism and for increasing the Jewish contribution to victory. This Open Letter was in support of the initiative taken by the Furriers Joint Council in New York City.

Thirdly, it is the report of pretty nearly every objective observer that the sentiments of an overwhelming majority of delegates at the Conference itself were strongly for all-inclusive Jewish unity along the lines of active struggle against fascism. Unfortunately these sentiments did not find sufficient active expression because the unity delegates were not organized and perhaps did not sufficiently realize that the achievement of unity requires *an active, organized struggle for it*, that unity does not come by itself or by merely wishing for it. In the fourth place, similar reports from all over the country indicate quite clearly that large numbers of delegates, upon returning home, are demonstrating a desire to repair the weakness of the Conference and are looking for ways and means of stimulating the work of the Interim Committee along the lines of all-inclusive Jewish unity against fascism.

It should also be noted that the prestige and standing of the consistent Jewish anti-fascists, including the Jewish Communists, have risen appreciably in Conference circles and among the masses that have participated in the Conference. While the prestige and position of the *Forward* group, that is, the delegates of the Jewish Labor Committee, have been considerably weakened. This, too, is the opinion of many objective observers.

But more convincing, perhaps, than any of these factors, was the reception given by the American Jews to the Soviet Jewish delegation, Michoels and Feffer. Such an outpouring of American Jews, and thousands of non-Jews, united in enthusiastic greetings to a delegation, was never seen before. And what were these meetings about? They were demonstrations for Jewish unity against fascism. They were expressions of a desire on the part of the American Jews of all walks of life (with the notable exception of the Dubinsky-Chanin-*Forward* clique) to develop in the United States a strong and active Jewish unity for victory and for close collaboration with the Soviet Jews for the same purpose.

The visit of the Soviet Jewish delegation was an event in American life of far-reaching importance. The immediate



achievements of this visit are already evident. The delegation helped strengthen the fighting power of American Jewry, its patriotic devotion to America, its desire for unity against fascism and its readiness to do everything for the survival and future of the Jewish people. It must also be noted that in doing so the Soviet Jewish delegation has helped materially to strengthen the national unity of the American people as a whole. It certainly contributed immeasurably in helping to isolate further the Dubinsky-Chanin *Forward* clique.

It goes without saying that the delegation proved to every one that the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee of Moscow, denounced and slandered by all enemies of Jewish unity as well as of American national unity, truly represents the Soviet Jews, the glorious anti-fascist unity of the Jewish people in the Soviet Union. The delegation also demonstrated to America that the Soviet Jews are in truth the vanguard of the Jewish people, its strongest and most advanced section in the struggle for survival. And at the same time the delegation helped to demonstrate to the entire world the greatness, the influence and the creative significance of American Jewry both for the growth of the American nation and for the Jewish people the world over.

In doing so, the delegation laid the basis for certain very practical and important win-the-war activities. It laid the foundation for practical collaboration between the Soviet and American Jews. It strengthened the friendship between the Soviet Union and the United States, thereby strengthening the anti-Hitler coalition of America, the Soviet Union and England for a speedy victory and for friendly collaboration after victory. The delegation created the condition for broad Jewish American and general American aid to the Red Army and for Jewish American actions to help reconstruct the life of the Jewish people in Europe as well as in the Soviet Union.

It is now possible to look forward to a systematic collaboration between the two greatest Jewish communities in the world—the American and Soviet Jews—as well as with the Jewish

community in Palestine and with the Jews of England, Canada and Latin America. And for these purposes: for enhancing the Jewish contribution to victory, to help hasten victory through the immediate opening of the second front, to organize and present a united Jewish indictment and accounting against fascism when the liberty-loving victorious peoples will present the general account against fascist barbarism, and to work jointly for the outlawing of anti-Semitism the world over. In the development of these activities an important and unifying role will surely be played by the Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists as well as by the Jewish Council of Russian War Relief.

It is clear, however, that the more consistent anti-fascist forces of American Jewry, especially Jewish labor, will have to enter the situation more prominently and more actively. Only then will it become possible to rally the wide masses of American Jews in support of the American Jewish Conference and for its further development along the lines of all-inclusive Jewish unity against fascism. In this work, Jewish trade unionists and such organizations as the Jewish People's Committee and the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order have a very important role to play.

But it must be understood that the chief obstacle to the realization of all-inclusive Jewish unity against fascism *still remains* the *Forward-Dubinsky-Chanin* clique which dominates the Jewish Labor Committee. It is this clique, in alliance with the Lipsky-Segal Zionists, which presents the greatest danger to the further development of Jewish unity and to the Jewish Conference itself. It is therefore obvious that there can be no talk of further promoting Jewish unity unless this is done on the basis of concentrating all efforts towards further unmasking and isolating the *Forward-Dubinsky-Chanin* clique which dominates the Jewish Labor Committee.

The fact is that the prestige of the Jewish Labor Committee is steadily declining among the workers and in Jewish life generally. But the Jewish Labor Committee is still a powerful force for evil, deriving its main strength from the fact that this

clique, through Dubinsky, dominates the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

The irony of the thing is that this union has a tradition of real progressivism in the American labor movement. It was, in fact, a pioneer for progressive trade unionism in the United States. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated time and again that most of the Jewish members of this union, as well as the non-Jews, do not support and are not in sympathy with the reactionary anti-unity policies and conspiracies of the Dubinsky clique. Notwithstanding this basic fact, the Dubinsky clique dominating the union is exploiting its great influence, power and prestige to promote policies which are definitely detrimental to America's war effort.

It has been demonstrated time and again that the Dubinsky-*Forward* clique, which dominates the I.L.G.W.U., carries out a policy in general American life which is in fact opposed to national unity behind the President. It advocates and works for a "long war," and against hastening victory over fascism. It carries on all kinds of activities against coalition warfare and the immediate opening of a second front. It militantly opposes friendship and collaboration between the United States and the Soviet Union, orientating on a policy of destroying the Soviet Union. It is militantly fighting against the strengthening of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. In alliance with John L. Lewis, Hutcheson and Matthew Woll, this clique is playing a very important part in preventing trade union unity in the United States and also unity among the trade unions of the United Nations. And in Jewish life this clique is energetically promoting a policy of sabotage against every effort of Jewish unity against fascism, playing in effect the role of Jewish Quislings.

The time has arrived when the struggle against this clique in the Jewish Labor Committee has become a central task of Jewish labor and all Jews in the struggle for Jewish unity for victory. This has become particularly the central task of the membership of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union as well as of such organizations dominated by the

same clique as the Workmen's Circle. The Jewish workers must find ways and means of curbing the treacheries of this clique. They must find ways of demonstrating in every possible way that the *Forward*-Chanin-Dubinsky clique does not speak for them, but, on the contrary, speaks in violation of everything they stand for and fight for.

Never before in all its history has Jewish labor, as part of American labor, had greater responsibilities to fulfill. No other social group in Jewish American life can give the movement for Jewish unity and the American Jewish Conference the strength, the enthusiasm, the effectiveness and stability which Jewish labor could in alliance and in partnership with all other Jewish classes and groups. That is why it still remains true that the chief problem and task of the Jewish anti-fascists in the United States are to awaken and mobilize Jewish labor for active participation in the struggle for all-inclusive Jewish unity for victory.

A. B.

*New York,*  
*October, 1943*

## I. AMERICAN NATIONAL UNITY AND UNITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WE CONSIDER the unity of the Jewish people in America as part of the national unity of the American people as a whole. We look upon the unity of the Jewish people throughout the world in the same way; that is, as an aspect of the unity of the United Nations. It is on this basis that we build our practical conclusions about Jewish people's unity today. And on this basis we seek the solution of the practical problems pertaining to the unity of the Jewish people.

Moreover, we hold that he who fights against, or stands in the way of, American national unity is thereby also an enemy of Jewish people's unity. The converse is also true. Those among us who fight against the unity of the Jews of America thereby disrupt the strengthening of American national unity.

The same is also true of the relationship between the unity of the Jewish people throughout the world and the unity of the United Nations. It is now clear to everyone who wishes to understand, that whoever seeks to disrupt the unity of the United Nations, especially the unity of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition, thereby greatly endangers the unity and the future of the Jewish people. Conversely, those among us who do not permit the firm establishment of true unity among the Jews of all countries, especially between the Jews of America and the Jews of the Soviet Union and of Palestine—also bring the greatest harm to the interests of the United Nations.

From this it is evident why we attach so much importance to Earl Browder's book *Victory—and After* (which was published in Yiddish under the name "The Road to Victory"). This book treats the two chief problems of the war and the peace—fundamentally these are the problems of the national unity of the American people, and the problems of the unity

of the United Nations. The conclusions which Earl Browder draws not only shed a clear light on the special problems of Jewish people's unity, but also help us to discover the way to solve these problems. In our further conclusions we shall fully base ourselves on the fundamental thoughts of Browder's book, on the national unity of the American people and on the unity of the United Nations.

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Today there are few open enemies of American national unity and the unity of the United Nations. But there are very many concealed opponents and enemies. Who they are is more or less known. They are the defeatists, the Red-baiters and the fifth column. When one speaks, therefore, of the need to strengthen American national unity and the unity of the United Nations, one must especially bear in mind the dangers that stem from these internal enemies.

Unfortunately, this important truth is still not fully recognized among certain influential circles of the American people. It is generally recognized that there are defeatists and fifth-columnists and anti-Semites of whom we must beware. But the necessary conclusions for our day-to-day policies are not always drawn from this fact. On the contrary, one still notices among certain government leaders and other influential groups a certain lack of concern about the dangers that stem from the fifth column. And this is bad.

This is bad for two reasons. First, because with such lack of concern about the internal enemy, it is impossible to wage the proper struggle against its conspiracy. Secondly, because it is also impossible to put an end to the serious influence which the fifth column exerts upon substantial patriotic elements of the American people. We must remember that the fifth column—the defeatists, the anti-Semites and Red-baiters—dwells in our midst, in the midst of the American people. They are intimately linked with many groups of people through economic, social and political threads. They therefore have great oppor-

tunities to influence and demoralize sections of our people, who are themselves very patriotic but who do not always see through the dangerous tricks to which the fifth columnists resort to carry on their treacherous work.

The implications of all this are well established in Browder's book. We must first of all expose the defeatists and make known the danger which stems from them. We must isolate them from the American people. We must so expose them that no one will want to have anything to do with them or permit himself to be influenced by them. If only this were done, much would be achieved. For then the damage which the fifth column can do to the war effort would be reduced to a minimum.

But this is not all. If the nation and its government were pursuing a consistent policy of isolating the Red-baiters and defeatists, the patriotic forces which waver from time to time in the conduct of the war would thereby be strengthened. It must be understood that one of the chief forces which causes vacillation and uncertainty in the conduct of the war is the pressure and influence of the defeatists. If we isolate them we thereby limit their influence by more than half and render it almost impossible for them to spread doubt and weakness into the ranks of patriotic sections of the American people.

And there is another thing that must be done. We must constantly strengthen the influence of the consistent democratic and anti-fascist elements in America's national unity. It is no secret that in the American nation, among the various classes and groups which constitute the American nation, there are elements which are more democratic and others which are less so—there are elements which are consistently anti-fascist to the very end, as well as elements which are not so consistent. Of course, all these elements must work together constantly in order to strengthen national unity. Otherwise there can be no victory. It is also clear, however, that the stronger the influence of the consistent democratic and anti-fascist forces, the stronger will be the national unity of the nation as

a whole, and the greater will be the assurance of our final victory over Hitler, the Axis and fascism.

In other words, the struggle for the strengthening of American national unity today means, concretely, two things: First, the defeatists, the anti-Semites, the Red-baiters—the fifth column—must be isolated and their influence over the patriotic elements of the people must be severed. This will strengthen the war effort of our country. This would also strengthen the wavering and vacillating elements. Second, the influence of the democratic and anti-fascist forces of the people—the working class, the farmers, the intelligentsia—must constantly be increased and broadened in America's national unity. These forces, and especially the working class, are the backbone of our nation, and therefore the backbone of American national unity.

We must similarly approach the problem of the unity of the United Nations. Today we rarely meet open opposition to the United Nations in our country. But secretly and clandestinely, the defeatists and Red-baiters carry on a constant war against the policies of the United Nations. They do this by endeavoring to weaken the main strength of the United Nations, the foundation upon which it is based—namely, the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition.

The United Nations comprises 32 nations. All these nations should be equal. They should take equal part in the United Nations. It is known, however, that the builders and leaders of the United Nations are America, the Soviet Union and England. This does not mean that China, for instance, is less important for the United Nations than England, America or the Soviet Union. No. China is just as important and should occupy an equally important place in the United Nations. Unfortunately, however, this is far from being so. But from the practical viewpoint of the present war effort, it is clear to everyone that the decisive and leading force in the United Nations is the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. This is a fact—a fact which Hitler and his agents in our country have appraised realistically, and much better than some of the sup-



porters of the United Nations. We must never lose sight of this fact when we speak of strengthening the United Nations and of guaranteeing victory.

We must understand, once and for all, that he who wishes to strengthen the United Nations and secure its unity must first of all strengthen and secure the unity of America, the Soviet Union and Britain. If the unity of this coalition is strengthened, then the unity of the United Nations as a whole is strengthened, and the quick and ultimate victory of the United Nations is guaranteed. Conversely, those who refrain from strengthening the unity of the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition or those who seek to weaken this coalition—work quite definitely in the interests of Hitler, whether they know it or not. The strengthening of the anti-Hitler coalition will in the end also serve to win for China an equal place among the United Nations. And only in this manner will it be possible also to bring into the United Nations as free partners India and the nations of Africa, as well as to make sure that the aspirations of the Jewish people will finally be realized.

## Economic Questions and National Unity

We can work successfully for national unity in America only if we do so with our eyes open. That is, we must realize that we are living in a country that is composed of various classes and groups whose economic interests are not the same. Not only are their economic interests not the same, but between certain classes, as for example the workers and the capitalists, the economic interests are contradictory. The question, therefore, is: How should these varied and conflicting interests be treated so that they may not only not interfere with national unity and the conduct of the war but, on the contrary, help strengthen the war effort?

Browder's book makes an unusually important contribution to the solution of this question. And it is done in this book in a very concrete and practical way. Browder does not think

that the varied and contradictory interests can be abolished at the present moment. He contends, however, that these conflicting interests can be composed peacefully if we constantly apply the principle that the interests of the nation as a whole and the interests of the war must be placed uppermost. That means that every economic conflict must be resolved in such a way as to serve, first of all, the interests of the war effort, regardless of the effect which it may have upon any class in society.

Applying this principle as a guide, we must inevitably conclude that one of the main interests of our nation in the war effort is to safeguard, as far as possible, the health and physical well-being of the masses of the people—the masses who must produce the food and ammunition for the conduct of the war. From this principle we can readily see that the products of our economy must be allocated in such a way as to meet first of all the needs of our armed forces; second, the needs of those who are working to produce for the armed forces; and third, the needs of all other sections of the population.

This is not realized so easily. For this we must have a fully organized and unified war economy, run according to a definite national plan. Moreover, in carrying out such a war economy, it is necessary to have the active participation not only of the capitalists, but also of the workers, the farmers and the government. For this, *national interests* must take precedence in every practical question, and special class and group interests must be subordinated to national interests. To achieve these goals, we must fight. We must, first of all, combat the defeatists, who constitute the chief obstacle, and we must also fight against those capitalists and business men who permit themselves to be influenced by the defeatists and thereby become themselves an obstacle to the further building of a unified and centralized war economy in America.

From this it is apparent that labor leaders, active workers and leaders of trade unions today must apply a completely new approach to the problem of protecting the economic inter-

ests of the workers. These interests have not been abolished. That is, the trade unions, whose function it is to protect the workers' economic interests, have that function today as before, except that the interests of the war demand that the workers' economic interests should now be protected in another way than before, and by different means.

For instance, the workers have voluntarily undertaken not to resort to strikes as a means of improving their economic interests. But this does not negate the fact that every day the workers in the factories and in the unions have numerous problems and conflicts with their employers on wages, hours and working conditions. These problems, it can be said, are of long standing and are constant. This, however, is not entirely correct. It is more correct to say that these are old problems which today confront us in a new way. On the question of wages, the workers are today interested primarily not so much in the increase in monetary wages but in what they can purchase for their wages. In other words, when the cost of living rises, the need to raise wages increases. But the workers understand that demands for higher wages alone are not enough; in fact, that such increases are not even the main thing. After all, if there should be instituted a control of prices whereby prices would really be stabilized, and if a system of rationing were to be instituted which would guarantee to all the necessary minimum for their elementary needs, then the question of increase in wages would be of little value. This question, in fact, would then cease to be as sharp and central a problem as it is today.

We see, therefore, that the labor movement concentrates its attention today chiefly upon such fundamental economic questions of the war effort as price-control and rationing, though it also takes into consideration such questions as wage increases when a rise in the prices of essential foods makes this absolutely necessary.

Further, the workers, both as workers and as American citizens, are vitally interested in increasing production, in intensifying the production of everything necessary for the conduct

of the war, as well as for civilian consumption. Many capitalists and factory managers agree with the workers on this. But not all of them. Besides, the problem of increasing the country's general production is intimately bound up with the problem of creating a fully unified and centralized war economy—something which we don't as yet have. In this connection, there are many problems which should be the concern of labor organizations and trade unions, especially of labor leaders, whose objective should be to strengthen the national unity of America and the war effort of the country.

In Browder's book, the economic problems pertaining to national unity are placed squarely and the way is shown for the labor movement to help the nation solve these problems. Browder dealt with these problems even more fully and concretely in a report which he delivered at a meeting of the National Committee of the Communist Party at the end of November, 1942. There, he deals primarily with what has to be done in order to raise the country's war production, and in that connection he develops further his ideas touching upon America's war economy generally. That address, which was published in a pamphlet entitled *Production for Victory*,\* must be recommended to all who have anything to do with labor questions and economic problems.

## Economic Changes in Jewish Life

It must be said here that Browder's new approach to the nation's economic problems has proven to be of great help also to those who have begun to notice new economic tendencies and transformations in the life of the American Jews. These tendencies are of such a nature that they deserve special attention.

It is now well known that in the transition from a peace economy to a war economy here in America, the security and welfare of the small trader and small manufacturer have been

\* Earl Browder, *Production for Victory*, Workers Library publisher.

greatly affected. We cannot discuss here whether this should have been so. The fact is that this is the case, and this has introduced many new phenomena into American Jewish life.

Let us cite them here and draw the necessary conclusions. First, the economic tendency which transforms small business men into workers has been intensified among the Jews of America. This tendency itself is not new. What is new is the great tempo and intensity with which this tendency operates. Though accurate statistics are not yet available, it is nevertheless known that increasing numbers of Jews who were engaged in small trade or manufacturing have become and are becoming workers. Second, Jewish workers who had always been engaged in light industry are entering the so-called heavy industries in increasing numbers; the same is true of many Jews who were formerly white-collar workers and professionals. Third, a significant number of Jewish technicians, who in previous years had no entree to the heavy industries, are now entering these industries in ever-increasing numbers. Fourth, Jewish women, as is the case with American women generally, are also being increasingly drawn into industry and war work. Fifth, a great many Jews are changing their places of residence. New York, for instance, is constantly losing many of its Jewish inhabitants to other cities in which there are war industries. Old Jewish communities are changing their numbers and composition, and new Jewish communities are coming into being.

These are only a few of the more important tendencies and changes which are noticeable in the Jewish community, and they have already projected a number of practical problems for various social and labor organizations.

The first problem is how to combat more successfully the policy of discrimination against Jews in the war industries. Discrimination against Jews in the so-called heavy industries of our country always existed. But in previous years, this discrimination affected only a very small percent of the Jewish population. The great majority of Jews worked and earned a living in industries which were usually designated as Jewish.

and where the problem of discrimination against Jews therefore did not exist. Today, however, when an ever increasing number of Jews must seek employment in the heavy and basic industries of the country, this problem assumes a different character. It becomes a problem for all the Jews of America; and not only for the Jews, but for the nation as a whole.

It must be borne in mind that discrimination against Jews in the heavy industries goes hand in hand with an intensified wave of anti-Semitism. It is a fact that the fifth column seeks to exploit the influx of many Jews into the heavy industries as the occasion for intensifying their anti-Semitic agitation among the non-Jewish workers in those industries, as well as among the non-Jewish population generally. In other words, the trend of our war economy, which compels an increasing number of Jewish workers and former small business men to seek employment in the war industries, presents to the Jews of America and to the country as a whole, the problem not alone of how to combat anti-Jewish discrimination, but also of how to combat and neutralize the new anti-Semitic campaigns which menace not only the Jews, but the nation's entire war effort.

This problem confronts the trade unions especially. The trade unions are obviously very much interested in combating anti-Semitic agitation, because anti-Semitism can undermine the very foundation of trade unionism. by bringing about cleavages in the workers' ranks. It is the task of the trade unions in the war industries to draw the Jewish workers into the trade union movement as soon as possible, bearing in mind especially the fact that many of these new Jewish workers were formerly small business men without any tradition or experience in trade union organization. In short, the trade unions now have the obligation to combat intensively anti-Jewish discrimination in the war economy, as well as discrimination against Negroes, Italians and others; to make clear to the largest possible number of workers the menace of anti-Semitism and to expose the anti-Semitic machinations of the fifth column; and lastly, to draw the new Jewish workers

into the trade union movement and to transform them into useful and needed members of the labor movement.

The above-mentioned changes in the economic life of the American Jews and in their places of residence advance new responsibilities for all Jewish labor and social organizations. They must take up the fight against discrimination in the war economy, and against anti-Semitism, with all their power and they must unite for that purpose with all non-Jewish progressive organizations of the American people. They must also take an interest in such matters as how to help the newly-arrived Jewish population to adjust itself into new communities and how to integrate the new inhabitants without delay into the local social life. These are immediate, practical problems.

It is also necessary, however, to pose the problem of the more far-reaching consequences which grow out of the above-mentioned economic and social changes in American Jewish life. One of these consequences, without doubt, will be the fact that large masses of Jews will become more closely integrated into general American life. Previously, many of these Jews lived in densely-populated Jewish communities, almost exclusively among Jews, and seldom had contact with non-Jews even in their economic life. Now, however, large numbers of Jews will work and live among masses of non-Jews and in the midst of the nation's most important industries. Thus these Jews will become more absorbed into the general political and social life of America to a greater extent than was the case hitherto.

This is a positive and good result. It does not in any way mean that these Jews will cease to be Jews, as some may think, though assimilationist tendencies among them will probably become strengthened to some extent. To understand this matter more fully and clearly, we must realize that a Jew in America is not only one who speaks and reads Yiddish. Unfortunately, this fact is still not accepted in certain Jewish circles, though it is difficult to see why. The fact is that the great majority of American-born Jews, most of whom do not

speak or read Yiddish, are nevertheless just as good Jews as those who speak and read only Yiddish. This is a fact. From this it follows that if thousands and tens of thousands of American Jews will now be drawn more deeply into general American life, economically and socially, it does not mean that they are lost as Jews.

On the contrary. We are inclined to think that a closer connection with general American life in all its aspects, including closer collaboration with the general American labor movement, will make of these new Jewish workers better fighters for the interests of the Jewish people. We definitely do not share the belief that a completely American or Americanized Jew cannot be a good Jew. And when we consider the entire international situation, which constantly strengthens the Jewish consciousness of the broadest masses of Jews, as well as their consciousness of kinship with all freedom-loving peoples, and especially with the American people, we may be sure that the net result of the current economic trends and changes in American Jewish life will be such as to strengthen Jewish and American consciousness among broad sections of the Jews in America.

We must therefore be prepared for a perspective which will lead to the conclusion that the total result of the economic changes and transitions in American Jewish life will strengthen Jewish consciousness and Jewish unity among the Jews of America, notwithstanding the fact that assimilationist tendencies will also become strengthened. Not only that, but the strengthened Jewish people's consciousness and Jewish people's unity among the Jews of America will develop and grow, not along the old path of a divided and split Jewish people—a people of "Jewish" Jews and of "American" Jews. No, not in that fashion will it develop but in a much better way and on a higher level, where English-speaking Jews and Yiddish-speaking Jews will understand each other much better, and together will build Jewish life in America, politically and culturally, and thereby will become more important and necessary for the growth and flowering of the American nation.



This can be said in a few words. It is to be expected—and for this we must work—that the economic changes in our life will make better Jews and better Americans of all the Jews in America.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that these perspectives for the Jewish masses in America can be seen with particular clarity from a close study of Browder's book and the problems of our country with which the book deals. With the help of the fundamental conclusions of the book, we can now examine more clearly the immediate problems and tasks of Jewish people's unity in America.

## II. PROBLEMS OF JEWISH PEOPLE'S UNITY

WHEN WE SPEAK of Jewish people's unity in America, we speak of a very simple thing. All American Jews should work together for our country's victory in the war and for a free life for our people in all countries after the war. When we say *all Jews* we mean just that, regardless of political tendencies and parties. We must do this in order to make the greatest Jewish contribution to victory. We must clearly understand that the greater the Jewish contribution to victory, the better will be the prospects for the Jews after victory. Jewish people's unity in America will help us make a greater contribution to American national unity. This unity is needed by America generally and by the Jews in particular.

Unfortunately there are still people among us who do not take the problem of Jewish people's unity seriously enough, who are antagonistic to Jewish people's unity and who seek all sorts of excuses not to help build it. Such Jews among us ought to become wiser. It is about time.

But we also have in our midst those who ridicule Jewish people's unity and who combat it in every possible way. We have in mind primarily the present leadership of the *Jewish Daily Forward* and similar elements in other Jewish social organizations. These people love to poke fun at the fact that the American Jewish Communists have suddenly, as they say, become heated partisans of Jewish people's unity. They even talk themselves into saying that the American Jewish Communists have betrayed their principle of the class struggle with their avowal of Jewish people's unity. However, the real joke of the matter is that the present leadership of the *Forward* appears to parade in the role of a defender of Communist principles and of loyalty to principles generally.

But the matter is too serious to be dismissed with a joke. It is necessary to clarify the fact that Jewish people's unity,

which is now growing and which the Jewish Communists support with all their might, is, in general, not of the same character as the so-called traditional policy of Klal Yisrael\* unity with which many of the present opponents of Jewish people's unity were concerned all these years. No, the present Jewish people's unity is something else entirely.

There was a time when the traditional Klal Yisrael policy and so-called Jewish unity, in reality did not mean Jewish people's unity at all. It meant, and under the circumstances then, could not have meant anything else but the subjection of the Jewish worker and the poor Jew generally to the will and the class policies of the Jewish boss and the rich Jew. In those years, the present leaders of the *Forward* and the other opponents of Jewish people's unity loved Klal Yisrael policies; and precisely the kind of so-called Jewish unity which strengthened the influence of the very rich Jews, and weakened the influence of the poor Jews and of the Jewish workers. Now, however, in the entirely new world situation, when Klal Yisrael means a genuine Jewish people's unity—Jewish unity has ceased to be kosher for the leaders of the *Forward*. At the present time, when Jewish people's unity is being built and can be built, not at the expense of the poor for the benefit of the rich, but as a genuine partnership of classes, of an organized and independent Jewish working class together with the organized forces of the other classes in Jewish life—a *partnership whose main objective is to save the Jewish people from physical extinction*—precisely at this time the appeal to Jewish unity has lost favor in the eyes of the present leaders of the *Forward*. But not entirely. The *Forward* still wants to fraternize with the extremely rich Jews of America, and it is interesting to note that its leadership wishes to fraternize not with those rich American Jews who favor Jewish people's unity, but precisely with those who do not wish to think of themselves as Jews and who are frightened stiff by Jewish people's unity.

\* The traditional policy that all Jews are one, which failed to take into account any class, political, or economic divisions.

There was a time when the appeal to Jewish people's unity meant in reality an attempt to weaken the influence of the workers and strengthen the influence of the wealthy Jews in Jewish life. In those days, the present opponents of Jewish people's unity believed greatly in such a policy. Today, however, when Jewish unity means Jewish people's unity, that is, to make the Jewish workers more active and more influential in the life of the Jewish people, they now think that Jewish unity is a bad thing.

The old traditional Klal Yisrael policy always meant that the Jewish worker should separate himself from the non-Jewish worker. It meant compromising the international unity of the working class. It meant implanting among the Jewish workers feelings and thoughts of chauvinistic nationalism—a type of nationalism which considers all other peoples inferior to one's own. Then Jewish unity was a good thing to the present opponents of Jewish people's unity; but now when the appeal to Jewish unity means, as it can only mean, that the Jewish workers are to become more closely aligned with the non-Jewish workers—because the entire American working class is struggling for the national unity of the entire American nation—now, mind you, Jewish unity has become something evil.

From this we infer only one thing. The argument that the Communists have betrayed their principles, so to speak, because they support Jewish people's unity, isn't worth a tinker's dam. It is only a pretext. It is only a means for pulling the wool over the eyes of the Jewish workers so that they should not see that opposition to Jewish people's unity means in reality opposition to the Jewish people, and primarily, opposition to the Jewish workers and their best interests.

The true problem now is no longer whether we need Jewish people's unity. The problem is rather how to attain it quickly and effectively. Today this problem has taken on a very concrete and practical character. In our opinion, the problem today confronts us in the following manner: *What can be done to overcome the weakness of those elements in*

*Jewish life who waver on the subject of Jewish people's unity?*  
This is in truth the central practical problem of Jewish people's unity at the present time.

To see that this is really so, it is sufficient to glance at the movement for Jewish people's unity in America and observe how it is faring. Thus, we arrive at the following picture:

The Jews of America have already demonstrated in a thousand ways that they want unity. This is undeniable. More, if we examine the various Jewish movements and organizations in America today, we can observe that the American Jews are already united on the most important problems which confront our people in the war. We maintain that the American Jews are already agreed on the following points:

1. To win the war. To achieve complete victory for America and for all the United Nations. To defend the interests of the Jewish people in all countries in the course of the war and after victory.

2. To uproot anti-Semitism and the fifth column. To strengthen the democratic rights of the Jews in America.

3. To save the Jews of Europe from the Nazis and to secure for the Jews of those countries their democratic and national rights.

4. To establish close friendship with the Jews of the Soviet Union and to collaborate with them for the victory of the United Nations and for the interests of the Jewish people in all countries after victory.

5. To help build the Jewish Yishuv in Palestine and to help establish brotherly relations between the Yishuv and the Arabs in Palestine and in the other Arab countries. To support the demands of the Palestine Yishuv that it be enabled to participate in the war of the United Nations as a free and organized national community.

6. To build Jewish people's unity in America constantly, which will make its greatest contribution to the strengthening of American national unity and to the growth and progress of America as a nation.

When we say that the American Jews are already united

on such a platform, we do not mean, of course, that such a platform has already been formulated and formally adopted by the Jewish organizations which represent and speak for the American Jews. This is yet to come, and it will come. There can be no doubt about that. We do mean to say, however, that on such a platform or a similar one the Jews of America could easily unite if we would only present them with such a platform and ask them for their opinion of it. This, in fact, is the immediate task of Jewish leadership in this country.

In the course of the last few months we have seen in this country a whole series of declarations and actions by various Jewish organizations and groups of organizations, in behalf of the war. If one were to examine the demands of the Jewish masses, from which these declarations stem, he would immediately realize that life itself has already projected a platform of Jewish people's unity which is similar to the points we enumerated above. That is, in the heat of life itself, the platform of Jewish people's unity is being forged. The task of good Jewish leadership, therefore, consists in infusing into this process more consciousness, more planning, and more organized effort.

The movement for Jewish people's unity in America to date already has a number of important organized bases of support. Let us enumerate them here briefly: The American Jewish Congress; the unity forces in the American Zionist movement; the Jewish workers and their organizations; the Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists (popularly known as the Zhitlowsky Committee); the Jewish Council for Russian War Relief; the religious Jews and their organizations; the Landsmanschaften; the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order; the Jewish Trade Union Committee for Tanks and Bombers; the unity elements in such important Jewish organizations as the B'nai B'rith; influential elements in the American Jewish Committee who favor Jewish people's unity; the Jewish People's Committee; and important labor leaders who could work for Jewish people's unity except for the fact

that their influence is still paralyzed because of the domination of the present *Forward* leadership in the Jewish Labor Committee. This is in no wise a full list of the organized center of support for Jewish people's unity. In every center of Jewish life in America there exist numerous Jewish organizations working together for the war effort and for victory. We mean to include also the various community centers and Jewish Welfare Board organizations which play an unusually important role in the daily building of Jewish people's unity in America.

If we take all this into consideration, we must come to the conclusion that the movement for Jewish people's unity in America is literally pressing from all sides, that it is growing and mounting from day to day. But this movement lacks full political consciousness and program as well as a united national leadership. We must underscore this. For this reason it is so very necessary that a clear program of Jewish people's unity and a united national leadership should be established as soon as possible.

Can we say that the leaders of the American Jews do not understand this? No, we cannot say this. A number of attempts have already been made by various Jewish national organizations to achieve the above objectives: namely, a clear program of Jewish people's unity and a united national leadership. The question is, therefore, why the delay? Why aren't these things established sooner? Why does it take so long?

We must find an answer to these questions. The answer is that influential elements in Jewish life are still wavering on the question of Jewish people's unity. That is, many leading forces in our life which generally have a favorable attitude to Jewish people's unity, are apparently not yet ready to undertake all the necessary steps to realize this unity. In other words, they waver and hesitate, and because of that, full realization of Jewish people's unity in America is being delayed.

A few examples will illustrate what we mean. As long ago as April, 1942, for instance, the American Jewish Congress adopted a very good program for a united Jewish war effort.

That program has since been endorsed by a great many Jewish organizations, and among these were such important, consistent, anti-fascist Jewish organizations as the Jewish-American Section of the International Workers Order, the Trade Union Committee for Tanks and Bombers, and the Jewish People's Committee. One might have thought, therefore, that the leaders of the American Jewish Congress would feel encouraged to take the initiative energetically to unite all Jews in America for victory and also for after victory. This was realized only in part, however, when the American Jewish Congress organized the "United Jewish War Effort" and later a special financial drive to help the Red Army. These were, in fact, very important steps from which much good will result, but still only first steps. The whole program of the United Jewish War Effort still has to be put into effect. The question is, therefore, why is it progressing so slowly?

Another example: we have a Jewish Labor Committee in America. Affiliated to the Committee are a great many unions embracing a majority of the Jewish workers. The Workmen's Circle also belongs to it. It is, in brief, a Jewish labor organization which might have played an exceptionally important role together with the American Jewish Congress, the Jewish People's Committee, the Jewish-American Section of the International Workers Order, B'nai B'rith, the religious Jews and their organizations, the Landsmanschaften, and important forces in the American Jewish Committee—in partnership with all these and other forces, the Jewish Labor Committee might have brought about, in a very short time, complete Jewish unity in America. But the fact is that the Jewish Labor Committee, due to the fact that the *Forward* leadership dominates it, was and remains today, one of the chief disrupters of Jewish people's unity in America. To repeat: the Committee which could have been the chief force for Jewish people's unity has become, and is today, the chief obstacle to such unity.

What is the reason for this? Once again, the answer is to be found in the wavering and weakness on the part of influential



elements, respected labor leaders who belong to the Jewish Labor Committee. These elements would like to have Jewish people's unity, would like to work for it, but they have not found the strength to free themselves from the domination and the sabotage of the present *Forward* leadership.

And why does the American Jewish Congress proceed so slowly on the road to Jewish people's unity? It is because here, too, in the ranks of the American Jewish Congress itself, there are forces which do not want Jewish people's unity and which stand in the way of such unity. They are the elements (among them some leaders of the Poale-Zion) who, in the American Jewish Congress, follow a political line of division and separation, similar to the line which the present *Forward* leadership pursues in the Jewish Labor Committee.

What we have, then, is the following picture: The people's movement for Jewish unity grows; the most influential leaders of American Jews of all classes and political tendencies are in favor of achieving such unity. But this is developing too slowly chiefly because many of those leaders do not struggle with sufficient consistency against those forces in Jewish life which stand in the way of Jewish people's unity. On the contrary, instead of fighting, they waver and frequently yield. Therefore we say that one of the central problems of Jewish people's unity in America today is to find the way to overcome the weaknesses of those elements in Jewish life who vacillate on the question of Jewish people's unity.

## The Enemies of Jewish Unity Must Be Isolated

The answer to the problem of how to strengthen the hands of the weak and wavering is to isolate the enemies of Jewish people's unity, separate them from the Jewish people, and cut off their influence from Jewish life. This conclusion must be drawn because the chief reason for the vacillation on the part of influential Jewish leaders on the question of Jewish

unity lies in the pressure and terror of the enemies of Jewish people's unity. Who the enemies are is quite well known today. They are the Jewish "Red-baiters," they are the stubborn inciters against the Soviet Union, and all the elements in Jewish life who place their own partisan and sectarian clique interests above the interests of the American nation as a whole, above the interests of the United Nations. They are the elements who do not stop at anything to prevent complete Jewish people's unity.

The chief center of these enemies of Jewish people's unity is to be found, as is known, in the present leadership of the *Forward*. We need not prove this here, though one of our chief tasks is to make this fact known to the general Jewish public and to see to it that all Jews understand it clearly. The "Red-baiting" tactic of the present *Forward* leadership, which is analogous politically to the conduct of the Dies Committee, is literally poisoning Jewish life in America. The line of constant incitement against the Soviet Union, which the *Forward* pursues daily, is a menace to the Jews and a menace to America. The persecution and terrorization by the *Forward* leadership of every Jewish leader who dares to work for Jewish people's unity are one of the chief obstacles to the unification of our people in this war. This is chiefly true of most of the vacillation of influential Jewish leaders in America on the question of Jewish people's unity. Their wavering stems from the pressure and the terror of the present leadership of the *Forward*.

When we speak therefore of isolating the enemies of Jewish people's unity from the Jewish people, we mean primarily and chiefly the present leadership of the *Forward*. But this is not all. In many other Jewish organizations there are elements who follow a political line similar to the one practiced by the *Forward*. We find such elements, also, as already mentioned, in the American Jewish Congress, where some of the leaders of the Poale-Zion pursue the same tactics of division employed by the *Forward* leadership—for example, in the Jewish Labor Committee. This is no accident. The dominant lead-

ership of the Poale-Zion works hand in hand, on many matters, with the leadership of the *Forward*.

Enemies of Jewish people's unity can also be found in the Zionist movement in America and in circles of the American Jewish Committee. In each case, the policy of these elements is similar to the policy of the *Forward* leadership, and in most cases, a close alliance exists between these elements and the *Forward* leadership.

It is therefore no exaggeration to say that the chief source and center of opposition to Jewish people's unity is to be found in the present leadership of the *Forward*. From this we draw the only possible practical conclusion, and that is: to overcome the weaknesses of those elements in Jewish life who waver on the question of people's unity we must isolate the leadership of the *Forward* from the Jewish people, and we must cut off its influence from Jewish life.

There are those who say that the weaknesses of those who waver and hesitate on the question of Jewish people's unity stem not from the *Forward* terror, but from something else. It is claimed that the reason why influential friends of Jewish unity waver on this question is the fact that these elements are really not anti-fascist, certainly not consistent anti-fascists. We do not agree with this opinion, though we recognize that there is a kernel of truth in it. But a kernel of truth is not the whole truth.

It is true that many of those who waver are in reality not anti-fascists in principle. And it is certainly true that those who waver are not *consistent* anti-fascists. This fact certainly has much to do with their wavering, but it is not the only reason for their vacillation at the present moment, certainly not the chief reason. The chief reason, as was already mentioned, is the influence, the terror and the pressure which the enemies of Jewish people's unity exert upon these elements. The chief cause at the present time is the pressure and terror exerted by the *Forward* leadership. We must not forget this.

Look again at the situation of the Jewish labor movement in America. Is it not a fact that not only the Jewish masses but

also the overwhelming majority of their leaders are against fascism and for Jewish people's unity? This is a fact which no one can deny, and yet we have a Jewish Labor Committee which embraces the majority of organized Jewish workers, and this Committee in practice is an obstacle to Jewish people's unity. What is the reason?

The answer is to be found in the fact that among the leaders of the organized Jewish workers in America there are still many influential people who permit themselves to be paralyzed and terrorized by the *Forward* leadership. True, there are, fortunately, also other leaders of organized Jewish workers, for example Ben Gold, president of the International Fur and Leather Workers Union. Labor leadership of this type really represents the consistent anti-fascist forces among the Jewish workers. In the trade union movement in America there are many prominent leaders of the same political tendencies as Ben Gold. But unfortunately this tendency still represents a minority among the Jewish people. The majority of Jewish labor leaders still are of the type who permit themselves to be influenced by the *Forward* terror, *even though their own political orientation leads them in the direction of Jewish people's unity*. When we take all this into consideration, we must once again come to the conclusion that the chief cause at the present time for the wavering and weaknesses of many Jewish leaders is to be found in the terror and pressure of the enemies of Jewish people's unity—by the present leadership of the *Forward* and the elements politically aligned with it. This means that if we wish to help those who waver, to overcome their weaknesses, we must fight to isolate the *Forward* leadership from Jewish life.

From what we have said above, we do not wish to convey the impression that the *Forward* leadership is all-powerful. It would be bad, indeed, if we exaggerated the power and influence of the *Forward* leadership and underrated the power of the unity forces in Jewish life. The fact is that the process of isolating the present *Forward* leadership *has already begun*. We could illustrate this point from many events that

have happened in the last few months to prove that cold winds have begun to blow around the enemies of Jewish people's unity. More than that. We could also prove that the *Forward* leadership itself has already begun to feel the first signs of the coming isolation. The best proof is to be found in the fact that the *Forward* leadership has been hesitating to let the Chanins take the limelight too much. Further proof is to be found in the fact that Abe Cahan, editor of the *Forward*, himself found it necessary to declare openly (cf. *Forward*, December 13, 1942) that their intent and purpose are of the highest, that they are really the best friends of the Soviet Union—not just fellow travelers, of which they accuse Zhitlow-sky, but true “co-fighters.” What does all this prove? It does not prove, as some may think, that Abe Cahan has changed his line, so to speak. Such a thought would be a serious mistake. It does mean, however, that these people have begun to feel the danger of the oncoming isolation and have decided that they must be a bit more careful. This means that they intend to continue their old divisive work with somewhat different methods.

A few words should be said in regard to these methods. In the declaration which Abe Cahan made on the 13th of December, he tried to create the impression that the Communists and the anti-fascists generally are waging a war against the *Forward* because it is a Social-Democratic paper. According to Abe Cahan it would seem that the Communists persecute him because he will not become a Communist. He indicates that clearly and keeps insisting that he wants to remain a Social-Democrat. He does not wish to become a Communist. All that he wants is to be allowed to be a collaborator with the Soviet Union. This is a new method, a new trick, a new maneuver for the same old splitting purpose—not to permit the unity of the Jewish people.

What is the truth? First, that the Communists and the Jewish anti-fascists generally are struggling against *the present leadership of the Forward*. They are not struggling against the *Forward* as a newspaper or Jewish social institution. Let us

bear this clearly in mind. Second, the Jewish Communists and anti-fascists generally are not struggling against the present *Forward* leadership because it is Social-Democratic. By no means. They are struggling against that leadership because it acts as an enemy of Jewish people's unity. Let us bear this clearly in mind too.

Abe Cahan's fairy tale, to the effect that the Communists are trying to make a Communist out of him, will fool nobody. We know many Communists, but we never met a Communist yet who wanted Abe Cahan in his party. More important is the fact that it is now ten years since the Communist movement the world over has been pursuing a constant policy of collaborating with people of all political tendencies, especially with Social-Democrats, for the general purpose of fighting fascism. The entire world knows this. But Abe Cahan wants to tell the world that the American Jewish Communists are persecuting him because he insists on remaining a Social-Democrat!

There is still another matter which must be clearly established. The American Jewish Communists have long ago taken the position that questions of ideology—for example Communism or Social-Democratism—must not be made, at the present time, matters of sharp conflict among the masses, but rather that all forces must be concentrated on the struggle against fascism. It must be understood thereby, however, that Communists remain principled and consistent opponents of Social-Democratism as an ideology, and that on appropriate occasions, Communists and Social-Democrats may have friendly exchanges of opinion on ideological questions when this can be done in a way that will not create conflicts among the masses or draw their attention away from the main struggle.

This does not in any way contradict the main line of the Communists, which demands labor unity and people's unity to win the war and to stamp out fascism. On the contrary, *this is precisely the main line*. The question therefore remains, what reality is there behind Abe Cahan's fairy tale that the

Communists fight the *Forward* because it is Social-Democratic? It has no basis in reality.

The Communists are waging a struggle, not against the *Forward* but against *the present leadership* of the *Forward*. All anti-fascists do this. In increasing measure, the masses of the Jewish people and their leaders will do this, and they will do this because the present leadership of the *Forward* constitutes the chief obstacle and menace to Jewish people's unity.

It is time, therefore, that those who are truly for Jewish people's unity, but who waver because of pressure from the *Forward*, should cease to fear the *Forward* terror. The Jewish workers and the Jewish masses generally should say to those of their leaders who permit themselves to be influenced by the *Forward*: Become free people, do as your loyalty to the Jewish people tells you and help build Jewish unity.

It is clear that in Jewish public opinion, the consciousness is growing that it is necessary to be separated from the enemies of Jewish people's unity. There are many examples to prove this. Not long ago, the *Day* found it necessary to answer sharply the shameful attack which the *Forward* launched against the Zionists, and especially against Dr. Chaim Weizmann, because the latter sent greetings to a meeting for Jewish people's unity which took place in Carnegie Hall under the auspices of the Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists. It must be said, in passing, that these attacks against the Zionists have been conducted by the *Forward* systematically and not incidentally. Apparently the *Forward* has set itself the task of not allowing the Zionists to become more closely aligned with the people's movement for unity.

Apparently the *Day* understood this, like many others, and the reply of the *Day* to the *Forward* attack is only an indication of what Jewish life generally will have to tell the *Forward*, clearly and plainly, and the sooner the better.

The time has come when every self-respecting Jew must do everything in his power to see to it that the enemies of Jewish people's unity, and especially the group which now rule the

*Forward*, should stand alone. To those who waver and hesitate to break off relations with the enemies of Jewish unity and to separate themselves from them—to these the Jewish masses must say: Stop wavering, march forward with courage and determination, without fear of the *Forward*. Help unify all the Jews to save the future of our people.

## Some Questions Concerning Zionism, the Jewish Army and Palestine

Some think that if the premise is accepted that the Jews of America have to help build the Jewish national community in Palestine, this means that the Zionist position has been accepted. This would mean that thereby Zionism is accepted. To that we have to answer that this is entirely not so. The Jewish Yishuv in Palestine is one thing, Zionism is another. Perhaps this was not always so, but in the last years this is quite definitely the fact.

Zionism is a political and ideological orientation in Jewish life. Its creators are bourgeois and petty-bourgeois Jewish nationalists who, on the question of Palestine, hold to the dogma that with the upbuilding of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, the Jewish question the world over will be solved. Zionism is also a political movement and a political party, which pursues a special party policy on the question of Palestine. We need hardly prove that the majority of the Jewish people, and among them the Communists also, who feel close to the Jewish community in Palestine, have not thereby accepted Zionism as a nationalist ideology, nor Zionism as a political movement. The Jewish community in Palestine is an entirely different matter.

The Jewish community in Palestine is part and parcel of the entire Jewish people. Consequently, the interests and the welfare of this section of our people are near and dear to the Jews of all other parts of the world, regardless of the order or system in which they live.

Especially since, during recent years, it has become clear



that the Jews in Palestine are building a free and organized national life for themselves in which there are the possibilities that, with time, there will emerge a new form of Jewish national existence for the Jews living in Palestine. Among the chief conditions for the translation of these possibilities into reality are first, the victory of the United Nations over fascism and secondly, brotherly and friendly collaboration between the Jews in Palestine with the Arabs in Palestine and with the Arabs of all other countries.

This is not Zionism. This is something quite different. This does not uphold the Zionist dogma that in Palestine there can be built a homeland for the Jewish people the world over. This also does not mean the acceptance of the bourgeois nationalist ideology of Zionism, which contradicts the internationalist ideology of the working class and which also is not in keeping with the interests of the Jewish people. But it does mean the acceptance of an orientation toward the Jewish community in Palestine which today is already supported by the greatest majority of the Jewish people, and that we have to help build and strengthen this community. As to the Jewish question in all countries, it is a different problem which will have to be solved and will be solved in a completely different fashion.

For instance, in the Soviet Union the Jewish question has already received its complete solution. The solution is built on the principle of complete equality of all peoples and nations in the Soviet Union. There a socialist society was built, and on this foundation they are developing various national cultures which are socialist in content and national in form, according to the principle which Stalin has formulated.

In the Soviet Union the Jews are developing various forms of national existence. In some parts of the Soviet Union the Jews live as a national minority, greater or smaller in number. On the other hand, in Biro-Bidjan, we are witnessing the process of the development of a completely different form of national Jewish existence. There the perspective exists that a compact mass of Jews will aggregate on a definite part of

Soviet territory, from which, with time, there can grow a new form of *full* national existence.

Quite different is the condition of the Jews in America, who are apparently in the process of developing a specific form of Jewish people's existence, which differs fully from the Jewish national minorities of the capitalist countries in Europe, and is also not similar to the forms of national life which the Jews have evolved in the Soviet Union or in Palestine.

We have, in other words, a varied picture of many forms of national and people's life, which the Jews are developing in different parts of the world, and which are dependent, to a great extent, on the social and political conditions in the countries in which this section or the other section of the Jewish people lives. It is clear, therefore, that the Zionist party solution for the Jewish question has nothing to do with the attitude toward Palestine and to the Jewish question as a whole, which is today being accepted by the greatest majority of the Jewish people in all countries, and that it is possible and necessary to support the Jewish community in Palestine, irrespective of whether one is a Zionist or not a Zionist.

There is such a thing as a Jewish people's attitude to the Palestine Jewish community, which is neither Zionist nor anti-Zionist. This is a stand which the movement of Jewish people's unity should and can accept. We uphold this position. This is a position which is intimately connected with the question of winning the war and of creating a people's unity among the Jews which will enable them to make their greatest and most notable contribution to victory.

It is also asked if it is necessary to support the proposal for a Jewish army, if this people's attitude to Palestine is accepted. The answer to this is: it depends upon what is meant by a Jewish army.

If the forming of a Jewish army of all Jews throughout the world is meant, which would join the armies of the United Nations in the same way as the armies of the Soviet Union, America or England, then the answer is: No.

The idea of such an army cannot be supported and the

majority of the Jewish people actually do not support it. The Jewish people see quite clearly that such an army is an illusion. Jews fight in the armies of the countries in which they are citizens and in which they will continue to live after the war. And this should really be so. Therefore there can be no talk about a Jewish army for the Jews of the entire world. Such a proposal contains very serious dangers which we have to guard against, although the motives of those who propose such an army can be the best in the world. The proposal for such an army, among other things, carries the danger that it questions the citizenship and the national rights of the Jewish masses in the countries in which they have lived up to now and in which they will continue to live, regardless of what the future of the Jewish national community in Palestine will be.

But there is also a proposal and a demand for another sort of army. We mean here the demand which comes from the Jewish community in Palestine itself. What is it? They demand that the Jewish national community in Palestine should be given the possibility to participate militarily in the war, first, to the extent of its forces and second, that the participation should be organized in such a way that Jewish military divisions, organized by the Palestine Yishuv, should take part on the battlefields together with the British and other armies of the United Nations.

This, as you can see, is an entirely different matter. This deals with the military participation in the war, not of the Jews of the entire world, but of the Jewish national community in Palestine. This deals with the national demands and rights of the Palestine Yishuv, and when we support the Jewish national community in Palestine and its national rights this demand should likewise be supported.

We have to add one important, principled point which the movement for Jewish people's unity must insist upon. That point is that the same right to participate in a full degree in the war against fascism must be guaranteed to the Arabs in Palestine and all the other Arab nations. More than this, the United Nations must take all steps to draw in the

Arab peoples as intimately and closely as possible into the war together with the Jews, and also adopt all measures to create brotherly bonds between the Jews and the Arabs.

Another question is asked. If this should be the attitude of the movement of Jewish people's unity to Palestine and to the Jewish army, is it possible for Zionists and non-Zionists to work together? The answer to this is simply "yes." Zionists and non-Zionists, the entire Jewish people, can very definitely work and fight together. The fact is that such collaboration has already begun. Zionists, although not all of them, have already seen that Jewish people's unity is necessary and that such unity is possible only on a platform which can unite all Jews. This cannot be the Zionist party platform, nor the position of the anti-Zionists. It can only be a Jewish people's platform, one which receives and will receive the support of the entire people.

It is therefore clear that Zionists and non-Zionists must put aside their ideological differences and subordinate their special party interests and must come together on such demands and on such policies which all Jews will support. From what has been said previously, it is clear that on the question of the Jewish national community in Palestine as well as on the question of a Jewish army, the Jewish people of all countries can unite on a policy of support to the Jewish Yishuv, on a policy which simultaneously seeks to defend Jewish interests, general, democratic and national, in all the other countries, according to the conditions under which the Jews live and according to the forms of national existence which they can develop there.

And now the last question which we want to deal with here. It is asked: Upon whom shall the Jews orientate on the question of the future of the Jewish community in Palestine? Shall they orientate on England, or America or the Soviet Union? It is known that in Zionist ranks there are various tendencies, some of which emphasize a second country or a third. From this some conclude that since there is no unity on this question among the Zionists themselves, how can unity of all Jews

be expected on this question?

To this question, too, there is a simple answer. Life has already demonstrated that the Jewish people orientate themselves, and must orientate themselves, not upon any one of these three great democratic countries, but on *all three*.

The Jewish people must orientate themselves upon the coalition of England, the Soviet Union and America, the coalition which builds and leads the United Nations. The question is clear. Whatever hopes the Jews have for the future, their first task is to guarantee that there will be Jews in the world who will be able to have a future. This means first of all winning the war and destroying fascism, and together with it—anti-Semitism. If this is accepted as the starting point of all our discussions, then it is clear that Jewish hopes must be based upon the chief forces which lead to victory and which will achieve victory. That is the Anglo-Soviet-American coalition. The Jewish people are therefore interested, together with all other freedom-loving peoples, that this coalition should continue, that it should be strengthened, that it should fight in coalition on the battlefields and that it should be continued after victory. It is clear, therefore, that on this question too, there can be full Jewish people's unity, in which Zionists, Communists, Socialists, religious Jews, and all other Jews can work together.

### III. THE ROLE OF THE CONSISTENT ANTI-FASCISTS IN JEWISH PEOPLE'S UNITY

IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD that in the movement for Jewish people's unity, as in American national unity generally, there are different classes, groups and political tendencies. All are united in the general determination to triumph over the enemies of our country and our people. This is the chief factor which makes possible the national unity of America, in general, and people's unity of the American Jews, in particular. This does not mean, however, that all classes, groups and political tendencies which enter into national or people's unity, possess the same degree of ability to wage a consistent struggle against fascism. To hold this view would not be correct, for it is well known that in American national unity and in Jewish people's unity there are some groups and tendencies that are more democratic and more consistently anti-fascist than others. It is also well known that the laboring sections of the people are generally more democratic and more strongly anti-fascist than the non-laboring classes. Moreover, among the non-laboring classes there are sections that are more democratic than others.

From the above, it should be clear that we are fully justified in speaking of the role which the consistent anti-fascists must play in regard to Jewish people's unity. We maintain that the anti-fascist forces in Jewish life stem, in the main, from the Jewish workers, from the poorer sections of the Jewish people generally and from certain sections of the Jewish intelligentsia.

These are forces which, by virtue of their social and political status, are compelled to take a position demanding a struggle against fascism to the very end. They are, therefore, the principal consistent opponents of fascism. From this we conclude that these are precisely the forces in Jewish life which can

give Jewish people's unity the greatest stability and the greatest strength.

If this is so, it follows that the first task of the anti-fascist forces in Jewish life is to help build and strengthen Jewish people's unity. *Their first and foremost task is to support every movement among the Jews, every action of Jewish organizations, which defends Jewish interests and which moves in the direction of building Jewish people's unity.*

However, we must discuss this problem a little more accurately and concretely. Jewish people's unity in America has already reached quite a high level. We must therefore say that it is the task of the Jewish anti-fascists to support especially those elements in Jewish life *which have the power to take the initiative* to unite all sections of the Jewish people and which are in a position successfully to follow through that initiative.

Do we have such elements in America? Our answer is, yes. We contend that the leading elements of the American Jewish Congress find themselves, thanks to a variety of reasons, in a position which enables them really to assume the initiative to realize complete Jewish people's unity. Of course we know that in the American Jewish Congress there are elements which are hostile to the idea of Jewish people's unity. We already pointed this out. We also know, however, that these divisive elements are not among the decisive forces in the American Jewish Congress and that it is therefore possible, with a little effort, to overcome their opposition—especially if the unity forces in the American Jewish Congress should insist on their policy of unity, and fight for it energetically and boldly, and receive the help of the masses of Jews and of all other organized tendencies in Jewish life. Then, certainly the leadership of the American Jewish Congress would realize a historic task, and become the leading force in the process of unifying Jewish life in America and in bringing about Jewish people's unity generally.

Does this mean that we entirely discount the Jewish workers, trade unions, and the Jewish labor leaders? Definitely not.

The Jewish workers, whom we consider the very backbone of our people and the surest guarantee of our future, should and must play a decisive role in the building of Jewish people's unity in American and in the whole world. *We set this down as a principle from which there can be no swerving.* But this is not to say that at this time the Jewish workers in America are in a position that would enable them to assume the initiative to bring about people's unity. This is not the case.

The organized Jewish workers still constitute a minority among Jews. This is point number one. Our second point is that the Jewish workers have not yet reached the level of development which would make the great majority of our people recognize the workers as its leading force. We have not yet reached this stage. Point number three is that the Jewish workers themselves are not united today, but on the contrary, are greatly divided. True, the fault does not lie with the workers themselves. This we know. The responsibility rests with those elements in the Jewish labor movement which are a section of the *Forward* leadership, or which are dominated by the *Forward*. These are chiefly the forces which stand in the way of the unity of the Jewish workers. It is clear, therefore, that a working class which is itself not united is in no position to assume the leading initiative to unite the entire Jewish people, even if all other conditions were favorable for such a step. And we have already seen that the other conditions are not yet favorable for such a step.

Does this mean that the Jewish workers and their organizations today can and must play only a minor role in the movement of Jewish people's unity? Certainly not. No matter how difficult the internal situation among the Jewish workers, from the viewpoint of labor unity, the situation is such, nevertheless, that the Jewish workers of America can play an important and decisive role in the struggle for Jewish people's unity. The greater the number of Jewish workers and their organizations that will be drawn actively into this unity, and the greater the number of Jewish labor leaders who will come forward actively in the struggle for Jewish interests and for



the unity of the Jewish people, the greater and more decisive will be the role which the Jewish workers will play in Jewish people's unity. In other words, though the Jewish workers in America cannot now be the leading initiators and decisive leaders of Jewish people's unity, they can and must become a decisive and leading factor in that unity together with all other classes and sections of the Jewish people. In brief, *the Jewish workers, their organizations and their leaders, must and can become important and leading participants and partners in Jewish people's unity.*

The question, however, is how can this be achieved? We have already indicated the answer previously. We have said that the Jewish workers and especially the Jewish anti-fascists must exert their utmost influence to see to it that the American Jewish Congress and the social groups which are close to it, assume the initiative to create such a Jewish partnership, such Jewish unity, such Jewish people's unity.

If one should ask why the American Jewish Congress, our answer is brief. First, the American Jewish Congress represents varied masses of American Jews, native and immigrant. Second, it is in such a position, politically and socially, as to be able to enter readily into relations, and to strengthen those relations, with the Jewish workers, as well as with the very wealthy sections of the American Jewish people. It can do so precisely because it represents primarily sections of the Jewish middle class, and also a small section of workers. In the third place, the Congress is Jewish nationally-minded, and though its leadership is largely Zionist, it is nevertheless not a Zionist organization. With regard to questions of Palestine and Zionism, the leaders of the American Jewish Congress were always compelled to reckon seriously with the opinion of the people as regards Palestine, and not so much with the special party interests of the Zionist organization. In the fourth place, and this is perhaps the most important from a practical viewpoint, the American Jewish Congress today is the only nationally recognized leading general Jewish mass organization and movement which endeavors to develop

a policy of Jewish people's unity, even though this position is being carried out by people who waver and hesitate.

If we take all this into consideration, and if we wish to be practical, we must come to the conclusion that the American Jewish Congress is, so to speak, the logical organization which can successfully assume the initiative to help unite the Jewish people. The American Jewish Congress naturally cannot do this by itself. It can only serve as the initiator, the organizer, as it were. The American Jewish Congress must realize that Jewish people's unity means that the Jewish Congress must unite with the Jewish workers—with all the tendencies prevalent among the Jewish workers and not with any single one—with the unity forces in the American Jewish Committee, with the B'nai B'rith, with the religious Jews of all shades, with the Landsmanschaften, and with all other sections of the Jewish people in America.

Of course, the prospects for a speedy unification of the American Jews would be bright if not only the American Jewish Congress, but also the Jewish Labor Committee were to become active in this work. Together they could no doubt accomplish wonders for Jewish people's unity. But the Jewish Labor Committee is still under the domination of the *Forward* leadership, though we must underscore the fact that since the last national convention of the Jewish Labor Committee, a number of favorable developments have come to the fore. We have reference here to the fact that many trade union leaders whose organizations are affiliated to the Jewish Labor Committee have begun to show signs—feeble signs as yet—that they intend to free themselves from the *Forward* domination. The prospect, therefore, looks good for the role of the Jewish workers in the movement for Jewish people's unity. But we must reckon with the facts as they are. The facts are that the Jewish Labor Committee is still a hindrance and not a help to Jewish people's unity. We must therefore speak today of an orientation on the basis of which every Jewish labor organization must strive to exert its maximum influence upon the leadership of the American Jewish Congress, upon

the unity forces in the American Jewish Congress, to assume the initiative to achieve the unity of all Jews in America. Precisely here, the Jewish anti-fascists have to perform an important task. *It is their special task to convince the Jewish workers to adopt such an orientation.*

But with this task alone, the role of the consistent anti-fascists in the building of Jewish people's unity is not exhausted. Their first task remains to support every movement and action for Jewish people's unity, and, first of all, to support the initiative of the American Jewish Congress. But in order to achieve this in the best possible way, the Jewish anti-fascists have another task, to organize such actions and movements in the interests of the Jewish people, which *will stimulate and motivate other Jewish organizations* to do likewise, but on a greater scale and in a manner which will attract all the Jews of America.

Some who might think that there is a contradiction between these two tasks; that the second task requiring the anti-fascists to take steps of their own in the interests of the Jewish people contradicts the first task which demands that they support, first of all, the initiative to be assumed by other and larger forces in Jewish life. The fact is, however, that there is no contradiction between the two. Life itself has proven this. Let us illustrate what we mean:

Illustration number one: When the call for help for the Red Army came to us in America from the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee in Kuibyshev, the American Jewish anti-fascists suggested that the larger forces among the American Jews organize the answer to this call. But the larger American Jewish forces wavered and hesitated. Then, the Jewish anti-fascists, and among them naturally the Communists, convinced the Jewish organizations to which they belonged to take it upon themselves to answer the call. As a result, a number of unity movements got under way. For example, the Committee of Jewish Writers and Artists, the Jewish Council for Russian War Relief, and then the excellent campaign by the Jewish Section of the International Workers Order for Tanks

and Bombers; and later came the establishment of the Jewish Trade Union Committee for the same purpose.

What was the total result of all this? Was the process of Jewish people's unity thereby disrupted? Quite the contrary. Such action stimulated and motivated other broader masses in Jewish life to engage in this work, and thereby two good things happened. The campaigns which the anti-fascists themselves undertook brought immediate and real results in terms of concrete help for the Red Army. They produced widespread sympathy from the Jewish masses in behalf of those campaigns, they partly isolated the enemies of Jewish people's unity during the course of these campaigns, and, most important of all, they encouraged the unity forces in such organizations as the American Jewish Congress and others to undertake similar activities for the war effort and to pursue to some degree policies making for Jewish unity. What was the result? We obtained a great measure of Jewish people's unity—thanks to the stimulating and substantial work of the consistent anti-fascists.

Illustration number two. In answer to the most recent reports about the outrageous Nazi atrocities committed against Jews, the Jewish People's Committee (an organization led by anti-fascists of various tendencies) addressed a call to all Jews in America and to all Jewish organizations urging that broad people's action around a specific program of demands be presented to the United Nations. Jewish public opinion, as is known, was thoroughly aroused and the people showed definite signs that they were ready to support such action. But the leaders of the larger Jewish organizations, including those of the American Jewish Congress, wavered and hesitated. It took quite some time before a delegation was sent to the President, and even then, no specific demands were formulated except the request that the United Nations issue a warning to the Nazis. True, an attempt was made to organize a Jewish Day of Mourning but a national Day of Mourning was not really organized because there was no united Jewish leadership. The Jewish People's Committee exerted all its efforts to achieve

unity, but it did not stop there. It organized a mass demonstration in Carnegie Hall in New York.

What were the results? First, concrete demands of the Jewish people were clearly formulated there. A demand was made for the immediate opening of a second front in order to speed the victory. Support was extended to the Palestine Jews who demanded the Jewish Flying Squadrons be organized to bomb German cities in retaliation for the Nazi atrocities. The demand was expressed for practical united action by all Jewish organizations to save the Jews from extermination. A program of united action was put forward to outlaw anti-Semitism.

The effect of that demonstration is felt to this day. The broad masses of Jews in America at last saw a program of united Jewish action with which to combat Nazi barbarism. Their desire to unite around such a program was strengthened and thereby the people's movement in behalf of a united Jewish war effort was sustained and widened. Moreover, precisely because the demand for united Jewish action against Nazi barbarism was strengthened among the Jewish masses and the American people generally, the leaders of the American Jewish Congress felt encouraged and justified to take the initiative to organize a wider public response and announced a public meeting in Madison Square Garden together with the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. and other non-Jewish organizations.

In other words, this illustrates how self-initiated action by the anti-fascists, when the interests of the Jewish people demanded it, not only produced concrete results but also stimulated and activated larger organizations to exert similar efforts on a wider scale.

It seems to us, therefore, that we proved our contention. We have shown that there is no contradiction between the need to support the American Jewish Congress and the necessity of undertaking independent actions in the interests of the Jewish people. Both go hand in hand. They both serve the same purpose. They carry out the central task of the anti-fascists, which is to build Jewish people's unity and to stimulate

the leading initiative of larger forces in Jewish life and especially of the American Jewish Congress.

Another thing must be mentioned here as regards the role of the anti-fascists in relation to Jewish people's unity. There is a wrong impression in some quarters that the Jewish anti-fascists, and especially the Jewish Communists, are striving with all their might to assert dominance over the unity of the Jewish people. Some, as for instance the *Forward*, frequently claim that the Jewish Communists don't really care at all about Jewish people's unity but merely seek one thing—to dominate Jewish life in America. It is perhaps in place, therefore, to reply to this allegation briefly and to the point.

The Jewish anti-fascists, including the Communists, have already demonstrated not only with words but with deeds, that they do not seek dominance or hegemony, not even special privileges for leadership in Jewish life. They know that as yet they represent a minority of the Jewish people—an important and decisive minority, but still a minority. And a minority cannot effectively claim decisive leadership, let alone the right to dominate.

Jewish people's unity is the first imperative for the Jewish anti-fascists in the present world situation—during the war and for a long, long time after the war. The Jewish anti-fascists are bound to that fundamental policy with a thousand threads. And since they appraise the situation in America realistically and practically, they have come to the conclusion that the best way in which they as anti-fascists can be of service to Jewish people's unity is first, to support the initiative and leadership of the larger and broader forces in Jewish life, and second, to stimulate through their own action the initiative and leadership of those larger and broader forces. This is all very simple and those who wish to understand it can easily do so. From all this it can be inferred that the Jewish anti-fascists cannot, do not, and will not seek dominance or hegemony.

One thing they do seek and for this they struggle and will continue to struggle. They seek to live and work as a part of

the Jewish people, for they consider themselves part of the Jewish people. And not only do *they* thus consider themselves but the majority of the Jewish people think likewise. And the will of the Jewish people will win in the end.

And another thing. The Jewish anti-fascists do not pretend to be the best section of the Jewish people. They believe, however, that neither are they the worst section of the Jewish people. They consider themselves a worthy and useful section of their people.

Lastly, there are some among us who do not wish to recognize the anti-fascists, and among them the Communists, as a section of the Jewish people. Who these people are, we know. They are the enemies of Jewish people's unity. They are first and chiefly the group that leads the *Forward*, dominates the Jewish Labor Committee, and terrorizes a large number of influential people and organizations. To these, the enemies of Jewish people's unity, we say as follows: There is no power on earth that can exclude from the Jewish people or that can keep outside of the Jewish pale the Jewish anti-fascists, including the Jewish Communists. We say this for the simple reason that the Jewish anti-fascists are so closely bound up with the Jewish people that they may be excluded only if the whole Jewish people is excluded. There is still another thing we should like to say to the enemies of Jewish people's unity: Those among them who will remain stubborn and will insist that, once and for all, the American Jewish Communists and the anti-fascists generally must be placed outside the Jewish pale will in the end remove themselves from Jewish life. They will themselves remain outside the Jewish pale.

Life itself has already demonstrated that the policy in behalf of Jewish people's unity for which the Jewish anti-fascists strive is not only correct, but is already beginning to bring results. Life itself has already indicated many notable achievements on the road to Jewish people's unity. One of the most recent indications of such achievements, though admittedly not among the most important ones, was the formation of the "*Morning Freiheit Association*." The "*Association*," as is

known, was founded for a very practical purpose. The purpose was to accept the proposal of the owners of the "*Morning Freiheit* Publishing Company" to take over the political and social direction of that Jewish anti-fascist people's newspaper. The "Association" has taken upon itself to develop the work of the *Morning Freiheit* in such a way that the paper may become in a full measure the unifying center for all consistent Jewish anti-fascists in America. This will give the Jewish anti-fascists an opportunity to exert a greater influence and do more useful work for broad Jewish people's unity which the larger forces in Jewish life will have to lead.

It is necessary to point out that in the "*Morning Freiheit* Association" are to be found workers and leaders of various political tendencies. They work together for one general purpose: to unite and bring together all the consistent anti-fascist forces in Jewish life so that they may make a larger and more effective contribution to Jewish people's unity. On such a platform both Communists and non-Communists are now working in the "*Morning Freiheit* Association," and the prospect is that their joint anti-fascist collaboration will develop and become strengthened from day to day.

It is true that a number of people have had doubts whether such collaboration would be possible or practicable. It was said that ideological and programmatic differences among the anti-fascists would not permit them to work together to build up a Jewish anti-fascist people's newspaper, even if its chief purpose was to build Jewish people's unity. It was also said every attempt to suppress ideological questions and differences of opinion would be harmful. It has already been shown, however, that all these fears were completely unjustified.

Life itself has demonstrated that in order to have anti-fascists of all tendencies build a people's newspaper and a general center for their social activities, it is not necessary to suppress ideological questions and difference of opinion. One can talk about these problems, discuss them and hammer out differences in a way that is beneficial to all. It is necessary, however, to be on guard not to permit discussions of



such differences to become a matter of sharp struggle to divide and separate the masses. In practice we have seen that it is possible to conduct a paper in such a fashion. It can be done if one bears steadily in mind the fact that questions of ideology and ultimate objectives are now not the main thing, but rather that the main consideration now is Jewish people's unity—victory over fascism and the extermination of fascism. If one bears this clearly in mind, and if one's daily work is guided by this thought, then it is possible to have ideological discussions and serious exchange of opinion about problems of programmatic objectives and yet not produce a mass discussion and injury to united anti-fascist action and Jewish people's unity.

Therefore we believe that though the formation of the "*Morning Freiheit* Association" is not among the most important events in the development of Jewish people's unity, it is nevertheless of such character as to throw a bright light upon the unity movement and upon the ripeness of the moment for a closer alliance between all the consistent anti-fascist forces. In the last analysis, *this stems from the fact that the broad Jewish people's unity is itself becoming more ripe and powerful from day to day.*

We should also mention that the "*Morning Freiheit* Association" in its public declarations strongly emphasized the need for united Jewish effort in behalf of Jewish culture. In the circles of the "*Morning Freiheit* Association" it is clearly understood that spreading and building Jewish culture at the present time is itself a force for the survival of our people and for saving them from the fascist menace, and for the future of the people.

Let us therefore always hold high the honor and pride of the Jewish people! Let us awaken their courage and rouse their will to struggle! Let us strengthen their forces for victory over the worst enemy that we have ever had! Let us earn, through our contribution toward this victory, an honored place in a free life among the peoples of the world after the victory!





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