
A SOLUTION FOR PALESTINE

BY PAUL NOVICK

I. TRAGEDY

PALESTINE has become one of the knottiest problems of the struggle of the colonial peoples against imperialism and for national liberation.

Colonial struggles generally are neither "pure" nor "simple." Lenin, in his "Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up" written in 1916, speaks with withering sarcasm about those "super-revolutionists" who disdainfully regard the colonial struggle as something "impure" from a revolutionary standpoint because in the absence of a well-developed proletariat such struggles are conducted mainly by the peasantry and participated in by the middle class and even by sections of the bourgeoisie. People waiting for a "pure" struggle, Lenin said, will never participate in any struggle, do not want a struggle for liberation.

Stalin, in his *Foundations of Leninism*, has pointed out that in the struggle against imperialism the Emir of Afghanistan, a monarch, might play a revolutionary role while a "Socialist" like MacDonald (at that time leader of the Second International) might play a reactionary, imperialistic role.

No colonial struggle is "simple." The Palestinian problem, however, is especially complicated. In the first place, it involves a three-cornered

struggle. There is British imperialist oppression, and there are the Arabs and Jews who have been set against each other. There is also fascism, which has injected itself on both sides of the national struggle, posing both as the savior of Islam and as the supporter of "real" Herzlian Zionism (Revisionism). At the same time, the struggle in this small country with an Arab majority must have its repercussions in other Arab countries, in Asia and Africa. On the other hand, the struggle of the Jews in Palestine for security and national rights is linked with the fate of Jews in various countries, particularly in fascist and semi-fascist states like Germany, Poland and Rumania, where Jews are persecuted and pogromized.

British imperialism and fascism have kept the fires of national hatred burning in Palestine. The country has been in turmoil for years. Revolts and massacres have been occurring after intervals of relative peace. Since April, 1936, the country has been up in arms. Recently, the mutual extermination of Arabs and Jews has reached a frightful stage. Streets in Haifa, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and other cities of Palestine are witnessing scenes of most horrible bloodshed, of veritable human carnage, as the case was at the end of July when nearly

fifty Arabs were killed and scores wounded as a result of a bomb exploding in an Arab market place in Haifa, a few steps from where another bomb had taken a toll of nine lives about two weeks earlier. These and similar outrages followed months of terroristic acts against Jewish settlements. On July 12 nine Jews were killed, some of them burned to death in one of the agricultural outposts. Developments in Palestine have turned that country into a major tragedy for both Jews and Arabs.

The population of Jews and Arabs feels the terrific strain of continued warfare, terrorism, and turmoil. Many have had members of their families killed or wounded. Almost everybody feels the deplorable economic effect of the disturbances. A severe economic crisis, which began even prior to the outbreaks of April, 1936, has been sapping the strength of the country. (The extremely weak economy of the country was affected by the fascist invasion of Ethiopia.) Now Palestine is in economic near-paralysis.

Outbreaks have been the order of the day in the land for years. Even the casual visitor to that country during periods of relative peace could sense the latent menace of renewed outbreaks. When I returned from a visit to Palestine in 1932 I could not help but tell the people of my forebodings. I wrote of a burning national hatred in Palestine fanned by British imperialism and other forces. Even at that time there was a national antagonism in Palestine so violent that one felt something was bound to happen if things continued in the old way. Long before the present bloody disturbances Zionist leaders who had

heretofore been hiding the true facts from their followers were themselves drawing a picture of the state of affairs in Palestine that chilled your blood. That is, the Zionist leaders advocating the partitioning of Palestine.

A certain Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, a Zionist, writing in *The Nation* for December 4, 1937 ("Pogroms or Partition"), stated:

"I return from Palestine now with the melancholy conviction that this [the hope that the benefits the Jews were bringing to the Arabs would create a peaceful life] was an illusion; that realistically viewed the present aims of the Jews and Arabs are irreconcilable. . . . Anti-Zionist and anti-British sentiment has penetrated into every element of the Arab population. . . . This hatred of Zionism and the British has grown to such proportions, has become so intense, so articulate, so widespread, and so well organized, that it is the fundamental factor in the situation. . . . There is no doubt now that the Jews now reciprocate the feelings of the Arabs. Children in the Jewish schools are developing a militant chauvinism. . . . On the streets and playgrounds one sees drilling games and exercises designed to develop a military discipline. The Jewish colonies are well armed; the men are trained for defense. Armed guards patrol the fields day and night, and even children's picnics which I attended were guarded by police with loaded rifles. The new colonies are built like stockades with thick walls to keep out the bullets. . . . The Valley of Esdraelon, which the Jews have transformed from a swampy wilderness to a fertile garden, is a scene of peaceful beauty during the day, but at night it is like a battlefield, with armed men on guard everywhere and great lights flashing their signals back and forth to announce 'all quiet' or to warn of impending attack."

Now the "peaceful" days behind stockades and fortifications are gone. Colonies are attacked day and night. Innocent people are killed and wounded. Crops are burned, trees are

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uprooted. A bomb is thrown in Haifa. A bomb is thrown from a train passing the all-Jewish city of Tel Aviv. A bomb is thrown into an Arab bus. Jewish road workers are sniped at. That is the usual run of the news from Palestine now.

II. A POLITICAL QUESTION

One may be permitted to grow melancholy. One must not, however, lose sight of the political element which is the moving factor in the entire situation. The future of Palestine depends upon the solution of its political problem.

Over and again it must be stressed that it was (and is) idle to grow enthusiastic over the things Zionism has built in Palestine and be content with that. True, swamps have been turned into fertile fields and many important and attractive institutions have been built. At what cost is beside the point for the moment. Whether Arabs have benefited by this Zionist building, what Arabs, and how many—something which Zionism has always overlooked—is also beside the point now. The fact is that in all colonies building is going on and some sections of the population are benefiting. This can never be a deciding factor, since no amount of building can sway the great mass of the population from the big political problem, that of independence.

Too many Zionist-influenced progressive people, or even Socialists, permit themselves to be swayed by the various features of economic and even "socialistic" upbuilding. Whatever the value and volume of such building—it has little to do with the main issue of Palestine, which is *political*.

Over and again it must be stressed that Palestine represents first and foremost a *political* problem, that of a colonial country. Palestine is the *only* country on the Arabian peninsula without any self-government whatever. It is idle to presume that whereas the Arabs to the North (in Syria) and to the South (in Egypt), who have some sort of self-government, are nevertheless engaged in a struggle for more independence, the Arabs of Palestine, who have no voice whatever in the affairs of the country, will be content. It will not do to assume the position that all the trouble in Palestine is merely the work of "agitators" (who happen to be ever-present in all colonial countries).

In the June, 1936, issue of *The Communist* I dwelt at length on the political problem of Palestine ("Palestine—Land of Anti-Imperialist Struggle"). Fundamentally, nothing has changed. Some points of the Communist analysis, however, which have been strongly disputed by leaders of Zionism and representatives of Great Britain, are now openly admitted.

The British Royal Commission headed by Lord Peel, in the findings of its investigation of the disturbances of 1936, threw overboard the balderdash that the British government, when issuing the Balfour Declaration (November 2, 1917), proclaiming the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, was motivated by the desire to solve the Jewish question, to realize an age-old dream of the eternal people, etc., etc. The report, submitted July 8, 1937, a document of over 400 pages, with maps and tables and valuable material, frankly admits that "the Balfour Declaration was is-

sued in 1917 in order to enlist the Jewish support for the Allies" (p. 24); that the British were afraid "Syria and Palestine might be made the base for Turco-German attack on the Suez Canal." The Peel Report admits promises were made both to the Arabs and Jews (regarding Palestine, or what the Arabs understood to mean Palestine). The Report admits that the disturbances of 1936 were in effect an open rebellion on the part of the Palestine Arabs, aided by Arabs from other countries, against British rule:

"It has been pointed out that the outbreak of 1933 was not only, or even mainly, an attack on the Jews, but an attack on the Palestine government. In 1936 this was still clearer. Jewish lives were taken and Jewish property destroyed; but the outbreak was chiefly and directly aimed at the government. . . . They [the Arabs] denied the validity of the Balfour Declaration. They have never admitted the right of the powers to entrust a mandate to Great Britain. They hold that the authority exercised by the mandatory is inconsistent with the Covenant of the League of Nations and with the principle of self-determination embodied in that Covenant. . . . The Jewish witnesses agreed with the Arabs in regarding the 'underlying causes' of the disturbances as political. . . . It should be frankly recognized, then, that the ideal of the National Home is a purely Jewish ideal. The Arabs hardly come into the picture except when they force an entry with violence and bloodshed. That does not mean, it need hardly be said, that the Jews wish to oppress the Arabs or to keep them poor and backward. On the contrary, they maintain as they have always maintained—and we do not question their sincerity—that the establishment of the National Home has been and will continue to be a positive economic advantage to the Arabs. But for the average Jew that comfortable assurance is enough. He goes on with his work and tries to forget about the Arabs. In some of the older 'colonies' there used to be some sense of kinship with the Arabs or at least that fellow

feeling which comes from working side by side. But there is little of that left now." (pp. 104-119)

The report of the Peel Commission is regarded by the Zionist leadership as one of the most sympathetic documents coming from a British investigating committee, sympathetic toward Zionism. Particularly those Zionist leaders who are favoring the plan of this commission for the partitioning of Palestine have accepted this plan favorably (at the head of these leaders is the president of the World Zionist Organization, Dr. Chaim Weizmann). This very report admits that basically the grievances of the Arabs are political. Out of this analysis the Peel Commission drew the wrong conclusion that Jewish and Arab interests are irreconcilable and that therefore Palestine must be partitioned. This conclusion is, of course, incorrect.

The report makes the common mistake of identifying the interests of the Jews of Palestine with the aims of political Zionism. The overwhelming majority of the Jews living in Palestine want peace and security and the opportunity to make a living and to build up the country. They must have their national rights safeguarded, but they do not want to deny the Arabs their civil rights, something which the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate certainly do. Political Zionism, basing itself on these documents, opposes every attempt at establishing democratic self-rule in Palestine, while the Jews of the country, like the Jews everywhere, are in their majority for democracy and do not relish the rule of colonial oppressors. It is mainly the aims of these oppressors which are

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The Peel Report goes into the details of the history and the meaning of the promises Great Britain made to the Arabs and to the Jews. We are little concerned with this history, since we cannot recognize Great Britain's right to promise anybody something which does not belong to it. It is important, however, that the Royal Commission itself is forced to admit that this double set of promises is the reason for the unrest in Palestine. These promises were a means of *conquering* Palestine; so is the policy of Great Britain since 1917 a means of *holding* Palestine, the age-old policy of *divide and rule*.

The amount of frankness British imperialists permit themselves now is not limited to the statements of the Peel Commission concerning the motives of the Balfour Declaration. Listen to what a Mrs. Edgar Dugdale, niece of Lord Balfour and his biographer, told Mr. Webb Miller of the United Press last winter:

"Palestine is the key point of imperial communications and the key point to the Near East as far as 'power' (military) politics on the Mediterranean is concerned. If the Jewish state were founded we might expect that within the next ten years 2,000,000 Jewish young men and women would settle the country. Out of that number it is not impossible to expect the formation of a national defense force of 50,000 men."

(Some of the newspapers which printed the Webb series, like the *New York World-Telegram*, omitted this brutally frank paragraph, but this is how the United Press released Mr. Miller's story on December 21, 1937, a cablegram from London as of that

date. The *Morning Freiheit* of December 22 drew attention to the omitted paragraph in the *World-Telegram* story.)

In my article in the June, 1936, *Communist* I quoted from a cablegram of Mr. Augur, mouthpiece of the London Colonial Office, printed in the *New York Times* of January 19, 1936, wherein he spoke of a "Jewish militia of 50,000 men" that "may be a reality tomorrow." They seem to have settled on a Jewish army of 50,000 which would safeguard this imperialist gem—Palestine—situated at the Suez Canal, on the land route to India, and the base for the pipe line carrying the Mosul oil to Haifa as well as the base for British bombers for the entire Near East. Palestine is also the only strip of coast on the Asiatic mainland in the hands of the British facing the inflammable waters of the Mediterranean. . . .

The Machiavellian imperialist scheme to lure the persecuted Jews into a "national home" to be used as a spearhead for British domination of an extremely valuable strategic point is at the core of all the troubles in Palestine. Britain may "wish" that peace reign there—under its domination. But the policy is to keep Jews and Arabs divided and antagonized. The Histadruth (Jewish labor unions), in a memorandum submitted to the Peel Commission, stated that

". . . The government authorities have not only not encouraged joint Jewish-Arab trade union activity but have in most cases placed obstacles in the way of such activity."

This is important to remember! There simply cannot be peace in Palestine so long as the *political* status of the country remains the same. The

main enemy of peace is—British imperialism.

III. PARTITION

What caused certain Jewish leaders to fall for the promises of Great Britain?

In order to answer this question one must take into consideration the persecution of Jews in various countries, particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe, prior to 1917. Millions of Jews were looking for a way out of persecution and pogroms. Alongside of this burning desire for a way out there is a legitimate craving among Jews for statehood and, among certain sections of the Jews, particularly among the religious, a craving for Palestine, where a Jewish state was in existence some two thousand years ago.

This craving and the dire conditions of millions of Jews were played upon by Great Britain. Leaders of political Zionism, which has set out to solve the Jewish question by the return of Jews, or large sections of them, to Palestine, accepted the promises as the fulfilment of their dreams and endeavors. Was not self-determination one of the main points of Wilson's program? Was not the war fought for Belgium and other small peoples? Did not the Poles and others obtain their independence as a result of the war?

Zionist leaders accepted the Balfour Declaration, which promised on behalf of His Majesty the establishment of a Jewish National Home in Palestine, and proclaimed it as the Magna Charta of the Jewish people. Now it is admitted that that was a tragic mistake. These leaders did not take into

consideration the machinations of British imperialism, which really wanted Palestine for itself. They also did not take into consideration the fact that the nationalities obtaining their independence as a result of the war formed a majority in their respective countries, and that this fact could only strengthen the case of the Arabs, who form a majority in Palestine.

Part of the Zionist leadership now admits that it was an illusion to rely on the Balfour Declaration and on the Mandate which Great Britain subsequently received from the League of Nations purportedly in order to put the promises of the declaration into effect. But the desire for statehood and the craving for Palestine are still there. Persecution of Jews has become ever more barbaric. Many Jews are in need of a place, or places, to emigrate to and settle in relative security. This tragic condition has caused certain Zionist leaders to accept the new scheme of British imperialism to partition Palestine.

This scheme was forwarded by the Peel Commission in July, 1937. Since Jewish and Arab interests are "irreconcilable," the country must be divided so as to set aside the area where Jews constitute a majority to develop it into a Jewish state. A closer acquaintance with the facts shows the injustice, the impossibility, and the hopelessness of the plan. It shows up this plan as a new scheme on the part of British imperialism to hold and dominate the country.

According to the plan, Palestine, a country of about 10,000 square miles in area (about the size of Vermont), is to be split up in the following manner: Seven-tenths of the country

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According to the plan, Palestine, an area of about 10,000 square miles (about the size of Vermont), will be split up in the following manner: Seven-tenths of the country

are to be added to Transjordan (which is also under a British mandate) and turned into another Arab state, in addition to the dozen or so Arab states now to be found on the Arabistan peninsula. About one-tenth of the present Palestine, including Jerusalem, is to be kept by Great Britain, as guardian for the three religions interested in the "holy city." Britain is also to keep for itself a strip of land running from Jerusalem to Jaffa, on the Mediterranean Sea. The Jews are to be given about two-tenths of the country (over 2,000 square miles in area, about the size of Delaware) to be developed into a Jewish state under British protectorate. This state will constitute a narrow strip of land along the Mediterranean, with one end of it severed by the British corridor from Jerusalem to Jaffa. In certain spots this strip will be not more than eight miles wide. Of the five cities of this Jewish state, Tel Aviv, Haifa, Safed, Tiberias, and Acre, the last four are to be kept by Britain "temporarily," under a mandate.

It is enough to outline these details to recognize the impossibility and the trickiness of the plan. The Arab people have rejected it. A majority of the Jews have rejected it. It is true that among them are to be found orthodox Zionist leaders who still cling to the Mandate and the National Home, stating openly that the Mandate must be continued "until we Jews are the majority in the whole country" (M. Ussishkin, prominent leader of Zionism, in *Palestine Undivided*, Tel Aviv, May, 1938). Dr. Stephen S. Wise, leader of the American Zionists, belongs to this group, who have, how-

ever, recognized along with the majority of the Jews that the contemplated Jewish state is economically and politically an impossibility and will not bring peace between Jews and Arabs.

The majority of opponents to the plan fear that the partitioning of Palestine will create an "Arab irritant" which will be a source of constant warfare along the relatively extended frontier of the Jewish state. This fear is shared even by such Zionists who favor partition. They also fear the militarism which will of necessity prevail in the tiny country and are doubtful of its chances to meet the relatively big military budget. (According to the plan the Jewish state will also have to contribute a relatively high sum to the Arab state.)

Objections to partition are too numerous to be all recounted here. Amongst them is the realization that the Jewish state of over 2,000 square miles will start out with a population of about 625,000 people, a density of about 300 people to the square mile. This is in excess of the density of, for instance, Poland (213) and other agricultural countries which possess natural resources and a large industry. The Jewish state, having no resources like coal, iron, timber, etc., will hardly be in a position to absorb a large immigration, if any. Then, there is the argument that the Jewish state will immediately be confronted with an Arab problem of its own. About 300,000 of the population, or about 48 per cent, will be Arab. Of the 4,000,000 dunam of cultivable lands in the contemplated Jewish state—a dunam is less than an acre—3,000,000 belong to the Arabs.

Clearly, the new scheme of British imperialism will not bring peace. It can only sharpen the struggle, in addition to burdening the Jews with an impossible project which will tax their strength economically and embroil them in military adventures. But this is precisely the purpose of the "Balkanization" of Palestine. I have already quoted Mrs. Dugdale, niece and biographer of Lord Balfour, who stated in an interview with Mr. Webb Miller of the United Press that with the founding of the Jewish state "it is not impossible to expect the formation of a national defense force of 50,000 men."

The partitioning plan has *already* had the effect of sharpening the struggle of the Arabs. It has also created more favorable conditions for fascism, which has injected itself into the situation as the savior of the Islam and the liberator of the Arab peoples from under the British yoke. All of which supplies another argument against partition. By creating this Arab "irridenta," partition will clear the decks for fascism among the Arabs.

Progressive people all over the world are vitally concerned with this situation. Are the Arab millions in Asia and Africa to become the reserve of fascism, or are they to be a source for the anti-fascist struggle? The answer to this question depends on the struggle against British imperialism, for the independence of Palestine. Only under such conditions it will be possible successfully to ward off fascism from among the Arabs.

Incidentally, fascism is trying to work both through the Arabs *and the Jews*. The Revisionists, or New Zion-

ists, who have renounced the Havlaga (self-restraint) of the Jews in Palestine and have officially launched a counter-terror against the terrorism of certain Arab groups, are working with Italian fascism, as well as with the Nazis. The Revisionists have their militant groups dressed in brown shirts following the slogan of: "Judea must be conquered by the sword." They are fascist in their ideology and in practice. In Poland their groups have been used as strikebreakers. In Palestine they are bitterly fighting the Labor and Socialist Zionists. They were accused of the murder of the Labor Zionist leader Dr. Ch. Arlasaroff, who was killed in June, 1933.

The well-informed London *Week* for July 13 stated that

"... Terroristic bands of both people (Jewish and Arab) are being financed from Rome and Berlin. . . . The Italians, for instance, now frankly assert that the success of certain groups of Jewish terrorists in Palestine is due to the fact (they say) that the Italian government placed at the disposal of a well-known revisionist organization a training ship."

The violent nationalism and chauvinism on both sides were bound to breed groups of "uncontrollables" and of elements who would align themselves with fascism. By doing away with chauvinism, by the introduction of peace, and by a common struggle of Jews and Arabs against British imperialism, fascism will be undermined both among Arabs and Jews.

IV. A SOLUTION

How shall this be attained?

It must be made clear at the outset that *no* solution will be easy. As to partition, not even its adherents are

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enthusiastic about its outlook. Those Zionists who have accepted the scheme have done so out of despair. (The aforementioned Mr. Bernstein, in his article in *The Nation* supporting partition, terms it: "a major catastrophe.") They have no more hopes for the Mandate; they fear for the fate of a Jewish minority in an independent Palestine. They accept partition as a lesser evil, but as a major evil nonetheless. From what we have seen it will most surely turn out to be an evil bigger than the Declaration and the Mandate put together.

There is no easy solution, but a solution there is. It is embodied in the effort of the Communist Party and all progressive elements of Palestine for an understanding between Jews and Arabs. There are considerable elements among Jews and Arabs who want an understanding so that peace come to Palestine. Foremost among the Jews are—aside from the Communists—those elements who follow the line of Dr. J. L. Magnus, president of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Like most other non-Zionists (and the people of the American Jewish Committee with whom he is associated), Dr. Magnus is against partition. He is all for an understanding which, according to him, will open wide possibilities both for the Arabs and the Jews in the upbuilding of Palestine as well as other Arab lands. This will create the possibility for hundreds of thousands of Jews to settle in Palestine and in Arabistan generally. Under pressure of its non-Zionist members (Magnus amongst them) the Jewish Agency for Palestine, which is officially recognized by Great Britain, adopted at its session in Zurich, Swit-

erland, in August, 1937, a resolution favoring a conference with the Arabs. On the other hand, there are among the Arabs elements advocating an understanding. In fact, the majority of the entire population wants a peaceful settlement as a way out of the economic paralysis. Certain negotiations between Jews and Arabs began in 1936 and were interrupted at the behest of Britain.

An understanding which will guarantee the national rights of the Jewish minority and will give Palestine self-rule will no doubt not come about without the mediation of outside forces, whether of the League of Nations or others. It is clear, however, that the working class and the toiling masses of Arabs and Jews generally will play a deciding role in the shaping and mainly in the fulfilling of the guarantees for the rights of Jews and Arabs. These toiling masses will play the main role in forcing British imperialism to relinquish its present hold on Palestine, just as Britain was forced to do so in the case of other countries in the Near East.

There are well-meaning people who admit that they would best like an understanding between Arabs and Jews, but such a way out, they hold, is a "dream," a "utopia." They agree that British imperialism is the villain of the piece, but they hold that the struggle of Jews and Arabs together against British imperialism is mere "wish-fulfilment." This is reminiscent of the approach of certain well-meaning people in old Russia toward the struggle against tsarism. They regarded the struggle of Jews and Russians (and Poles and Ukrainians) side by side as something impossible. The

facts about Palestine are that Jewish and Arab Communists and other anti-imperialists *do* fight side by side, though their number is still small. And it is certainly an *immediate possibility* for Jewish and Arab workers to get together for an understanding amongst them.

The above-mentioned article in the July, 1936, *Communist* cites the following program advanced by the Jewish Communists in the U.S.A. as a solution for Palestine:

"1. All workers, regardless of race and nationality, shall be accepted into the unions of the Histadruth.

"2. Likewise, all agricultural workers, Arab tenant farmers should be organized together with Jewish tenant farmers in one body.

"3. The Zionist leaders must declare that they are for a truly democratic parliament in Palestine which should safeguard the full equality and all rights for the Jewish minority and its national development.

"4. Struggle against British imperialism, for a free Palestine.

"5. Free immigration under conditions 1 and 2. (At present there is no free immigration, since immigration is a monopoly of the Zionist organization, which selects the immigrants along Zionist lines; only the immigration of Jewish capitalists is free.)

"6. No land shall be bought without the previous consent of the peasants working the land.

"7. The rule of the church (Mohammedan, Christian, Jewish) to be abolished.

"8. The shameful transfer-agreement with the Nazi government, which has turned Zionism into an agency for Nazi export for the entire Near East, to be canceled."

Points 1 and 2 call for the establishment of real, bona fide, trade unions of all workers in Palestine, Arab and Jewish, and of organizations of Arab and Jewish farmers. Is *this* impossible? Of course not! Would the unity of the workers and farmers bring both peoples together and help eradicate

hatred and misunderstanding? Of course it would!

It is a matter of record that for generations Jews and Arabs have lived peacefully together in Palestine. When modern Jewish colonization was introduced into the country before the war many thousands of Arabs were employed in the Jewish settlements. This created bonds of friendship which would have become stronger if the practice had been kept up. The growth of the Jewish population in Palestine, which would undoubtedly have been faster than before the war, might not have been as fast as in recent years, but it would have been steadier and healthier, and the dangerous and bloody pitfalls of national hatred would have been avoided. (The 85,000 Jews in Palestine in 1914 were reduced to about 65,000 during the war; since 1919 this number was raised to the present figure of well over 400,000 as a result of immigration and natural growth. The Arab population of 550,000 grew to over 950,000.)

Because of the line of political Zionism Arabs were excluded from new settlements and gradually pushed out from places of work in old colonies. (There are still a few thousand Arabs working there.) The Histadruth, following the official Zionist line, refused to admit Arab workers as members of its unions. Picketing was practiced against city establishments or agricultural settlements where Arab workers were employed. The slogan "Buy local [*i.e.*, Jewish] products" was introduced. On the Arab side, similar methods were practiced. All this has separated Jews from Arabs, creating ever more prejudice

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and national hatred. One of the first steps in the direction of abolishing national hatred must therefore be the establishment of bona fide unions of Jewish and Arab workers together, followed by farm and other organizations.

I have already mentioned the memorandum submitted by the Histadruth to the Peel Commission, wherein the complaint was made that the government placed obstacles in the way of joint Jewish-Arab trade union activity. The Histadruth correctly stated in that memorandum that "a more liberal attitude on the part of the government toward this sphere of work of the General Federation of Jewish Labor would be advantageous to the economic and social development of the country as a whole and would open up new possibilities of a Jewish-Arab understanding which would consequently lead to the establishment of lasting peace in Palestine."

Precisely so!

The Histadruth must be congratulated for this stand. But words alone, or vague "joint activity" in the face of racial practices will not do. One of the first prerequisites for a struggle against obstacles for joint Jewish-Arab trade union activity would be for the Histadruth itself to stop the practice of racial picketing and racial slogans and to *open the doors of its unions to Arab workers*. By proclaiming such a new policy the Histadruth would immediately introduce a change in the situation, whether the government agrees or not. Many sections of Arab toilers who are now pushed into the arms of the chauvinist Mufti (head of the clergy) and

fascist agents would turn away from them.

Naturally, this would necessitate the giving up of the idea of a Jewish state and of gaining a majority in the country by racial methods or with the aid of Great Britain. Most Zionists have already realized the futility and the terrible hazards of ignoring realities. The Left wing of the Histadruth, the Hashomer Hatzoir (Young Guardians), openly came out at the last World Zionist Congress for a bi-national Palestine state of Jews and Arabs on a parity basis. The acceptance of the laughable and tragic "state" Britain is now offering is in itself a rejection of Zionist aims of solving the Jewish question on a world scale. The whole matter is now reduced to two—very important—points: (1) The safeguarding of the rights of the Jews now living in Palestine, and (2) the possibility for settling Jews from the fascist countries in Palestine. Both can be attained *only with the aid of understanding*. Partition would attain neither.

The bargaining point on the Arab side is their majority. The Jews, on their side, have a relatively high economy and relatively powerful unions and other organizations. The Arabs can gain greatly from the high technics and organization introduced into Palestine by the Jews. The Arabs will have to recognize the national rights of the important Jewish minority inside a democratically governed Palestine. *Whatever* guarantees may be established through negotiations between official Arab and Jewish organizations, as well as international bodies (which negotiations will, of course, have to take place), the unity

of Jewish and Arab toilers will be one of the best guarantees for the safeguarding of such rights.

As to the securing of a place or places for Jewish refugees from fascist countries, it must first of all be emphasized that in countries like the United States, Canada, South Africa, Argentina, and Latin America generally there is more possibility for that. More German-Jewish refugees have settled in countries other than Palestine, in spite of the fact that the years 1933-35 witnessed the highest immigration to that country. If only half the effort exerted in the direction of settling refugees in Palestine had been exerted into other directions, the doors of the United States and such countries would have been opened a bit wider, admitting many tens of thousands more of Jewish and other refugees. As to Palestine, the Jewish state resulting from partitioning would hardly create possibilities for immigration, as already seen. On the other hand, we must agree with Dr. J. L. Magnus that, as a result of an understanding, Jews and Arabs would be able to engage side by side in the upbuilding of Palestine and possibly

other countries of Arabistan, or of a *federation of Arab countries*, as Dr. Magnus puts it. This would open the possibilities for the immigration of hundreds of thousands of Jews.

Again, *an understanding and good neighborly relations will not be established overnight*. But Palestine has been in turmoil for the last twenty years. Three years have passed since the eight-point program for an understanding was forwarded by the Jewish Bureau of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. Had such a program been accepted then, we surely would have been in a different situation now. *A start must be made*. Jews and Arabs the world over are interested in that. The racial and chauvinistic practices employed in Palestine are bound to reflect themselves upon the life of Jews and Arabs in other countries. All progressive people are interested that an understanding be reached. *A start must be made*. The Jewish labor movement in Palestine, because of its better organization (and higher responsibilities) can accomplish a historical task in the direction of reaching such an understanding.