

mendous pressure to force the Jews out. Already Arab leaders have declared, over and over again, that "there are too many Jews in the country," a sinister and familiar slogan.

The Grand Mufti, who is the nominal leader of the revolt against the Jewish homeland, but who is backed by extremists even more anti-Jewish than he, revealed the Arab attitude bluntly before the Peel Commission.

Question: Does His Eminence think that this country can assimilate the 400,000 Jews in the country?

Answer: No.

Question: Some of them would have to be removed by a process kindly or painful as the case may be?

Answer: We must leave all this to the future.

But the pressure against the Jews will be downward as well as outward. Far from arresting the growth of fascism, the situation will encourage in the Arabs the fascism of conquest, in the Jews the fascism of despair.

At the present time Jewish fascism in Palestine is insignificant in numbers (though capable of much mischief) for a number of reasons, internal and external. The struggle to maintain the higher social level is bound up with a generally progressive economic ideology. Jewish immigration cannot proceed on the basis of a backward economy. A progressive economic ideology inevitably implies a progressive ideology.

Further, Jewish Palestine draws its support from a world Jewry which is predominantly anti-fascist. That support is linked up with the possibilities of sending into Palestine large numbers of Jewish refugees, who in turn bring in a renewal of anti-fascist ideology as well as generally higher economic and political standards. If immigration possibilities into Palestine are destroyed, then Palestine will be deprived of vital moral and economic assistance; the Jewish community, declining gradually into an Asiatic minority, will lose contact with the Western world. It will then be as useful for lifting the level of the country, or any part of it, as the wretched Jewish minority in Yemen. On the other hand, if the Jews are to be assured even of physical safety, it will again be with the assistance of England. What hope, then, that under these circumstances they will be able to contribute in a fight against British imperialism?

The attempt to reach an Arab-Jewish understanding must be preceded by the attempt to create the common economic basis of such an understanding. In the absence of such a basis, talk of understanding is dangerous wishful thinking.

The path of the proposed Jewish state is definitely not an easy one. But there are hundreds of thousands of Jews within Palestine, and hundreds of thousands waiting outside of Palestine, willing to take it. As against this, the proposal for a permanent minority position is a death sentence against the Jewish community of Palestine, and an indefinite postponement of the prospect of an anti-imperialist bloc—all in the name of Arab-Jewish peace.

PEACE BY UNDERSTANDING

A Communist Rejects the Partition of Palestine

PAUL NOVICK

TWELVE Jews were murdered in Palestine on July 21. Before that, a bomb was thrown into a crowd of Arabs in Jerusalem, killing nine and wounding more than a score. Before that, Jews driving in an automobile on one of the streets of Haifa were set upon and murdered, amongst them the brother-in-law of Dr. Chaim Weizmann, president of the World Zionist Organization. This and other acts of murder and terror in Haifa came in retaliation to a bombing outrage in that city, during which many Arabs were killed and wounded.

In the course of ten days between July 5 and July 15, sixty-six Arabs and twenty-nine Jews were killed, 176 Arabs and 101 Jews were wounded. Usually, Jewish casualties are the more numerous.

The present bloodshed is but an episode in a situation which has prevailed in Palestine for years. The bloody toll has been particularly high since the mass Arab outbreaks of April 1936.

When blood is being shed, it is hard to talk of past mistakes and future plans. When a Jewish settlement is in danger of attack, it must protect itself. It cries out against terroristic attacks. When passengers traveling in an Arab bus are sniped at, they want the guilty caught and rendered harmless. Terrorism is the plague of the country. There are burning hatreds abroad, the result of deep-set grievances and wrongdoings, as well as the result of a violent nationalism and chauvinism. Imperialist and fascist agents have been busy sowing discord and hatred. The mere fact that Jews and Arabs travel in separate buses is an indication of the sad state of affairs. Yet, *because* of the acute seriousness of the situation, a solution for Palestine is one of the paramount issues of the day.

During the past twenty years, something basic in Palestine's position has made for national strife and bloodshed, although for generations before, Jews and Arabs had lived together peacefully. That "something" is the policy of British imperialism, of Arab leadership, and of political **Zionism**. These must be renounced if peace is to be attained.

A time has come when even British Royal Commissions are forced to admit things which they would not admit before. The Peel Commission, in its report issued July 8, 1937, after months of investigation in Palestine, has admitted that the Balfour Declaration of Nov. 2, 1917, promising a Jewish national home in Palestine, "was determined by the

exigencies of war . . . in order to enlist the Jewish support for the Allies" (p. 24). It admits that promises were made by Britain both to the Arabs and the Jews. It admits that the British mandate over Palestine, which was supposed to be the instrument for the establishment of the Jewish national home, is unworkable. It admits that at bottom an Arab rebellion is taking place in Palestine, a struggle for self-government.

Thus, the designs of British imperialism on Palestine and the sinister use which it has made of Jews and Arabs are now openly recognized. London's Chatham House, the unofficial forum of the British Colonial Office, admitted as much in its Information Department Paper No. 20, (*Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1936*). This study states that Palestine "is a vital problem for Great Britain. . . . It is the eastern outpost against any potential threat to the Suez Canal; it is the outlet of the oil pipe line from Mosul; it is the halting place on the international air route to India and beyond, and it is a starting point towards the desert motor road to Asia" (p. 9). One may add it is Britain's only stretch of coast on the Asiatic mainland facing the inflammable waters of the Mediterranean. "Augur," the New York *Times* correspondent in London, another mouthpiece of the Colonial Office, divulged some time ago (New York *Times*, Jan. 19, 1936) that "The [British] air force, even more than the navy, needs solidly established bases. . . . In that part of the world [Near East] they exist only in Palestine. . . . In the seat of the native population of Arabia the Palestinian Jews stand isolated, an outpost of Europe, and, if rightly handled, an element of strength for the empire. . . . Military experts say a Jewish militia of fifty thousand men may be a reality tomorrow." That this was not a mere guess was subsequently shown by a statement from Mrs. Edgar Dugdale, niece and biographer of the late Lord Balfour, author of the Balfour Declaration, to Webb Miller of the United Press about eight months ago. According to Mr. Miller's dispatch of Dec. 21, 1937, Mrs. Dugdale, who must have known the sentiments and intentions of Lord Balfour, stated: "Palestine is a key point of imperial communications and a key point to the Near East as far as 'power' [military] politics on the Mediterranean is concerned. If a Jewish state were founded we might expect that within the next ten years two million

Jewish young men and women would settle in the country. Out of that number it is not impossible to expect the formation of a national defense force of fifty thousand men."

Clearly, it was and is the design of British imperialism to use Jewish and Arab blood in order to conquer and control Palestine as a military outpost of the British empire. Clearly, British imperialism exploited the age-old craving of the Jewish people for statehood and the profound sentiment of religious and other Jews for Palestine in order to attain its own ends. A persecuted, hounded, and pogromized people was promised liberation and self-rule as a means of extracting from this people more blood and material resources and manpower to build a strategic base for the empire.

It is by no means my intention to emphasize the role of "perfidious Albion" solely to justify a position taken years ago, important as that may be. Recognition of the role of British imperialism is of *immediate* importance. Once the designs and machinations of British imperialism are recognized, the basic fault in the tragic Palestine situation can be understood. It likewise has to be recognized that all Jews and Arabs who strive for peace must renounce and fight British imperialism as the main enemy of the population of Palestine. It is British imperialism's policy of "Divide and rule" which has set the country on fire. Those Arab and Jewish leaders who have based their policies on British domination of Palestine, have been at fault. Without a recognition of these basic elements a solution is impossible.

The time has come for the leadership of the Zionist movement to admit that it was a tragic mistake (if not worse) to accept and proclaim Balfour's tricky declaration as the Magna Carta for the Jewish people. Now that a part of this leadership, foremost among whom is Dr. Weizmann, admits that the mandate, that other imperialist document, is unworkable and that it failed to fulfill the widely heralded hopes placed upon it, it is time to admit that *any other* British imperialist scheme will not fulfill the aims of *Zionism* but will only result in more strife and disturbances.

This applies to the plan to partition the small land of Palestine (ten thousand square miles, about the size of Vermont) into three parts. One-tenth (including Jerusalem) is to be kept permanently by Britain under a new mandate. Two-tenths, two thousand square miles or somewhat more (about the size of Delaware), is to be developed into a Jewish state, with the cities of Haifa, Safed, and Acre "temporarily" kept by Britain.

The purpose of this scheme was candidly outlined by Lord Balfour's niece.

On the other hand, leaders of the Arab movement have been playing with fascism and have accepted the assistance and guidance of Mussolini and Hitler. This is particularly true of some Arabian puppet rulers, from Hedjaz and other Arab countries, who heretofore served Great Britain. The Arab people will clearly not attain liberation with the aid of Nazi and fascist pyromaniacs. By becoming

the allies and pawns of fascism, these leaders are preparing the worst possible enslavement of the Arab people.

It is this fascist element, introduced into the situation in Palestine some time ago, which has been producing a bloody harvest. To a great extent, the terror is the result of a struggle of *two* fascist forces, those of Arab fascist-terrorists and those of Jewish fascists, the Revisionists (or New Zionists), both working for the same fascist master, as the very well informed *Week* of London has testified. "Terroristic bands of both people (Jewish and Arab)," the *Week* of July 13, 1938, states, "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 certain well known Revisionist organization a training ship."

These Arab and Jewish terrorists do not represent their people. Leaders of the Jewish Agency in Palestine, of the Histadruth (Palestine Jewish Labor Federation), and the Chief Rabbi have recently condemned the Revisionists in the sharpest terms as "murderers" who "stab the Jewish community in the back." The labor Zionist paper *Davar* opened a veritable barrage against the Revisionists, as did the general Zionist paper *Haaretz*. Last year, Arab leaders publicly condemned violence and asserted that a speedy understanding between Arabs and Jews is urgently needed. The economic situation both for Jews and Arabs is deplorable as a result of the constant turmoil.

The people of Palestine want a solution. What kind of a solution?

Palestine is a colonial country where a movement for liberation and self-rule is but natural. It is idle to talk about "agitators" keeping a people in turmoil for years. The Peel Commission report attempts at great length to prove that what has occurred in Palestine is a rebellion, a struggle for independence (pp. 104-119). Dr. J. L. Magnes, president of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, in his famous letter to the *New York Times* of July 18, 1937, emphasized that "rebellion" is a proper term for the Palestine events of 1936. A rebellion, of course, against imperialism. The same is true of the Arabs, north of Palestine in Syria and south of Palestine in Egypt.

But no colonial struggle is "pure and simple," particularly when fascism poses as the savior of Islam, when the very important Jewish minority must have its national rights safeguarded, and there is the need of helping Jewish refugees from fascist countries.

Under certain circumstances, the claim of "historic rights," even if it comes from a persecuted people with a legitimate craving for statehood, must be rejected. Under capitalism such claims can be solved only by war and by the subjugation of others. This cannot liberate the people instrumental in such subjugation. Under capitalism, "historic claims"

may lead to a general struggle for a re-division of the world.

Because of historic traditions, Jews will be drawn to Palestine. Since there is a considerable and important Jewish minority there, Palestine looms among the countries where Jewish refugees tend to seek a haven.

Heretofore, immigration into Palestine was conducted in a way to suit the needs of British imperialism and political *Zionism*. Great Britain wanted to have strategic points settled by Jews in areas along the railway lines, on the coast, along the northern frontier, etc. Political *Zionism* wanted more and more speedily to get a Jewish majority in the country. For these reasons, the economic conditions and possibilities of the *entire* population were hardly considered. In order to make room for new Jewish immigrants, Arab labor had to be kept out of Jewish settlements and even removed from settlements where Arabs for years had been employed by Jews. For the same reason, Arabs had to be kept out of the Histadruth.

This harmful method of immigration led to an almost complete separation between Jews and Arabs in Palestine. It was an additional factor of considerable weight for violent nationalism and chauvinism, for hatred and conflict. Such immigration must be renounced. Obviously, this necessitates rejection of the idea of a state based on British declarations and mandates. Those Zionists who have given up hope for past British plans must not, however, make the mistake of falling victims of the new British scheme of partitioning the country.

Jews as well as Arabs must face realities. Peace will come to Palestine only when Arabs recognize the economic and cultural importance of the Jewish minority for Palestine and for Arabistan generally. Jews have much to offer in building the country, as demonstrated by the upbuilding of their own community. Jews and Arabs have much to gain from each other if the upbuilding is done hand in hand, without discrimination against Arab or Jewish labor. Zionist leaders must recognize the folly and the danger of advocating a Jewish "state" and "majority." The deep sentiment, the justified desire for statehood among Jews, is of no avail if realities are overlooked.

Jewish statehood will be attained only under Socialist rule, as in the USSR where Biro-Bidjan is being developed into a Jewish Socialist Soviet Republic. Whether one agrees or disagrees with this viewpoint, Jews *are* a minority in Palestine, much as one may regret it (a Jewish majority in a given territory in Europe where they count in many millions would certainly be much more desirable). According to the Peel Commission report, there were in 1937 "at least" 400,000 Jews to 950,000 Arabs in Palestine. Peace and the introduction of a democratic and progressive order can be attained only on the basis of these realities. It is impossible to view the problem otherwise. Militant Arab chauvinists may be

ready for more bloodshed against the entrenched Jewish minority. Revisionists may proclaim that "Judea must be conquered by the sword." The overwhelming majority of Arabs and Jews reject violence and fascism.

One of the most important contributions toward a solution for Palestine was made by Dr. J. L. Magnes in his previously mentioned letter to the *New York Times*. Magnes states: "We have been returning to a small, already populated, even if not overpopulated, land and despite all 'rights' conferred on us by the states which won the war, these rights are a thousand times of less importance than the consent, if it is at all to be obtained, of the Arabs who live in the land and of the Arab peoples who will continue to be our neighbors even after British imperialism may have passed." Dr. Magnes would accept a new British mandate on Palestine on condition that "first, both Jews and Arabs are in Palestine as of right and not on sufferance; second, the chief reason for the mandatory's presence in Palestine is to endeavor to create conditions favorable to free and open negotiation of agreements between Jews and Arabs, such agreements to be incorporated progressively into the basic law of the land." Dr. Magnes feels that the partitioning of Palestine would create "terrible *irrendentas* on both sides of the new frontiers—new Balkans with their fierce *comitadjis* winked at by governments." There are many other points one can put forward against partition, but it is hard to disagree with Dr. Magnes on this point. Certainly his program is a program of peace.

Dr. Cyrus Adler, head of the American Jewish Committee, in a statement recently issued against the partition plan, called for a "working basis" between Jews and Arabs. Under the influence of its non-Zionist members, the Jewish Agency, at its session in Zurich, August 1937, adopted a resolution asking for a conference of Jews and Arabs under British auspices. Mr. Morris J. Karpf of New York, a non-Zionist member of the executive of the Jewish Agency, subsequently demanded such a conference irrespective of Britain's disapproval.

The Histadruth can truly play a historic role in helping to bring about a solution in Palestine. It is the best organized body in the country. Its left-wing elements have rejected partition (the Hashomer Hatzoir advocates an Arab-Jewish State on a parity basis). In a statement to the Peel Commission, the Histadruth declared: "The workers of both communities—the Jews, consciously, and the Arabs, instinctively—realize that there exists a real organic basis for the establishment of friendly relations between them." It deplored the fact that British rule has tried to prevent "Jewish-Arab trade-union activity." This Jewish-Arab activity, nay, the *unity* of Jewish and Arab labor for which the Communists have worked unceasingly, can be accomplished by the Histadruth. Such unity will guarantee a proper solution of the Jewish-Arab problem. Whatever

pledges by any international bodies drawn into the negotiations, it is organized labor and the unity of interests of Jewish and Arab toilers which will best uphold the rights of both nationalities.

On the Arab side, one of the leading Arab papers in Palestine, *Falastin*, stated about the Magnes plan: "Everyone, both Arab and Jew, should work to exploit the present existing eagerness for a settlement that may save the country" (*New York Times*, Dec. 12, 1937). The *Falastin* is certainly not alone among the Arabs but the Arab toiling masses will clearly have to play the main role in effecting an understanding with the Jews.

This will not be easy. *Any* plan for Palestine will encounter innumerable difficulties. Partitionment, for instance, announced last year, will take, according to its authors, at least two years before even an attempted introduction of the plan is made. Adherents of the plan admit that many years will pass before peace is restored. There is *no* easy solution for Palestine. But the new imperialist scheme of partition (laughable, if Palestine conditions were not so tragic) is even less workable than the mandate, and more perilous than the Balfour Declaration and the mandate put together. Partitionment is sure to keep the gates of Palestine closed to Jewish immigration for years (until the plan is put into effect) and leave little room for immigration later on. On the other hand, an understanding between Jews and Arabs which introduced peace to Palestine would no doubt continue the present temporary stoppage of immigration. But it would eventually open up possibilities for the settlement of great numbers of Jews in Palestine and other Arab countries. In the words of Dr. Magnes: "There should be many opportunities for proposing freely and openly negotiated agreements for limited periods between Jews and Arabs, between Jews of the world and Arabs of the world. . . . With Arab consent we could settle many hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews in various Arab lands. That is worth a real price."

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Comment by Mr. Samuel

THE space allotted me will not permit of more than a few random remarks on Mr. Novick's article. Our basic difference of outlook must be referred to the articles themselves.

That British imperialism, Arab leadership, and political *Zionism* are responsible for the hostility between Jews and Arabs in Palestine is not an illuminating statement, and taken in conjunction with the statement preceding, that for generations before the war Jews and Arabs lived together in peace, it is misleading. It must be remembered that the pre-war Jewish population of Palestine was only about sixty thousand, as against 550,000 Arabs. A huge proportion of the Jews were supported by the contributions of religious

Jews abroad. Jewish influence on the Arab economy was *nil*. If the implication of the two statements is that any considerable, progressive Jewish community could have grown up without altering the balance of forces and the relation of Jews and Arabs, it must be rejected.

Further: long before the appearance of post-war *Zionism*, scores of Jews were killed in the colonies by Arab marauders, and a Jewish self-defence, that of the *shomrim*, was found necessary. That British imperialism has aggravated the hostility and helped give it a new character is perfectly true. That the Jews could have built a modern economy in Palestine without awakening hostility is a point of view which may be held by a few extreme philosophic idealists.

The statement that the terror is "to a great extent . . . the result of a struggle between *two* fascist forces, those of Arab fascist-terrorists and those of Jewish fascists, the Revisionists," is, I think, inaccurate. One might as intelligibly say that the struggle in Spain is largely the result of a struggle between loyalist fascists and rebel fascists. That acts by individual Jewish fascists have aggravated the situation is true. But it would be absurd and misleading to ignore one amazing and significant fact: the two-year period of self-denying discipline (the spring of 1936 to the summer of 1938) during which the Jewish community, under the most desperate provocation, held to a policy of non-retaliation—an extraordinary moral and political performance which the whole world watched with astonishment.

If Arab leadership is, among other factors, responsible for the present fury in Palestine, it is naive to pay attention to the fact that "last year Arab leaders publicly condemned violence and asserted that a speedy understanding between Jews and Arabs is profoundly needed." An understanding on what basis? Complete destruction of the Jewish position? Gradual extrusion of the Jewish population? Hitler too wants peace—on his terms.

The quotations from Rabbi Judah L. Magnes and Dr. Cyrus Adler, president of the Jewish Theological Seminary, add very little to a factual estimate of the position. "With Arab consent we could settle many hundreds of thousands of persecuted Jews in various Arab countries," says Dr. Magnes. So we could. We could do likewise with American consent, British consent, French consent, and anybody else's consent. What conceivable grounds are there for believing that the Arabs will extend a consent which the rest of the world withholds? Dr. Adler calls for a working basis for Jews and Arabs, and Mr. Morris J. Karpf will support an Arab-Jewish conference irrespective of British approval. The citing of these views in connection with the point of view adopted in Mr. Novick's article might lead one to believe that these gentlemen mean an understanding from below, on the basis of labor action. But the fact is that on the whole these gentlemen mean nothing at all; they yearn for peace, and their