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THE STATUS OF JERUSALEM

Anticipating the vote of the United Nations on internationalization of Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared in the *Knesseth* (Parliament) that *Israel considers the United Nations resolution of November 29, 1947, as null and void.* THE NEW YORK TIMES, December 6, 1949).

The resolution of the United Nations discarded by David Ben-Gurion in such an unceremonial manner is no less than the historical document about the partition of Palestine which created the legal foundations for the very existence of the State of Israel.

We still remember the state of unlimited nationalistic elation among the Jews caused by this very resolution of the United Nations adopted on November 29, 1947, the document providing for the partition of Palestine and the internationalization of Jerusalem. At that time the nationalist-minded groups within the Jewish communities all over the world extolled the resolution as the fulfillment of the perennial dream of the Jews for independent statehood. At that time we Jewish Socialists who dared to oppose the growing nationalist tendencies among Jews, who dared to doubt the

Contents:

1. **The Status of Jerusalem.**
2. **COMISCO on Anti-Semitism.**
3. **Executive Session of the BUND.**
4. **Statements and Resolutions.**
5. **Franz Kursky Dead.**
6. **Refugees from Israel.**

historical wisdom of Jewish statehood in a partitioned Palestine, who maintained that the real solution of the Jewish problem everywhere is the establishment of Socialism, were brand-marked as traitors of the Jewish cause by Zionists of all political shades. Our refusal to recognize the profound wisdom of the solution expressed in the resolution of the United Nations adopted on November 29, 1947, was exposed by the same Zionist quarters as a lack of respect for the rules of democracy—since the resolution represented a decision adopted by the majority of the United Nations.

Almost exactly two years later, David Ben-Gurion, expressing the sentiments of the Jewish Parliament, regards the same resolution as a worthless piece of paper.

The Government of the State of Israel took a fatal step toward basing the existence of the State of Israel on *might* instead of *right*. This is the path followed by all nationalist governments throughout the current history of mankind. In this particular case, however, the traditional nationalist show of brandishing before the eyes of an amazed world the sword of power has tragic aspects for the vast majority of the Jews throughout the world, whose very existence and peaceful development is based upon respect for human rights.

What followed after this shocking declaration of David Ben-Gurion was even worse:

After the vote of the United Nations for internationalization of Jerusalem, word came from Tel-Aviv that the Jewish Government decided to move its offices into Jerusalem, to declare Jerusalem the capital of the Jewish State in open disregard of the majority decision of the United Nations.

Thus we witnessed a tragic and pathetic spectacle: One of the smallest states in the world, whose very existence is a result of a decision taken two years previously by the United Nations, is now openly deriding the United Nations and demonstrating its decision to disregard it.

We do not want to dwell upon the question whether the internationalization of Jerusalem is the best possible

solution. We are, however, deeply convinced that in the long run there is only one way to avoid new wars and bloody catastrophies and to preserve a lasting peace, and that is that all nations, big or small, abide by the decisions of the United Nations, whether they agree with them or not.

The vast majority of the Jewish population scattered all over the world has the moral right to demand from Israel not to jeopardize the cause of world peace by evoking the shadows of new conflicts and placing her nationalist self-interest above the will of the United Nations.

It may be added that the tragedy was not entirely devoid of a humoristic element:

The notorious chieftain of Irgun—the Jewish terrorist fascist-minded organization—Menachem Begin, now a member of the Jewish Parliament in Tel-Aviv in spite of his sinister role played in the assassination of Count Bernadotte, declared publicly in the Jewish Parliament:

If the United Nations will try to implement the decision about internationalization of Jerusalem, let them remember that my organization—Irgun—will rise again. (NEW YORK TIMES, Jan. 11, 1950).

The COMISCO on the Struggle Against Anti-Semitism

On December 9 and 10, 1949, an Executive Meeting of the Committee of International Socialist Conferences (COMISCO) was held in Paris. 18 Socialist parties of the world were represented at the meeting, including the BUND Coordinating Committee and—after a long and significant absence—the MPAI (from Israel). Among other problems discussed at the

meeting was the question of combatting anti-Semitism, particularly in Germany, which came before the meeting as a result of an address by a BUND delegate at a previous conference.

The problem was reported by the COMISCO Bureau Secretary, who explained that as a result of a

speech by the BUND delegate at the May, 1949, conference, the Bureau was charged with acquainting itself with and reporting on the problems of combatting anti-Semitic propaganda. The Bureau, it was reported, mailed on two occasions detailed questionnaires on anti-Semitic trends and policies to all associated groups. After the replies were evaluated, the Bureau came to the conclusion that it was necessary at this particular time and in collaboration with the German Social Democratic Party to take positive steps to counteract the rise of anti-Semitism in Germany.

In discussing the report, the German Social Democratic representative decried the singling-out of his country by the COMISCO Bureau. He pointed to the courageous address in the Bonn Parliament against anti-Semitism by the German Socialist leader, Schumacher, and to the banning from the Party of the Socialist councilmen who had voted against the approval of a physician as head of a city hospital due to his Jewish ancestry. He also disclosed that the German Socialists would introduce a bill in the Bonn Parliament making anti-Semitism and anti-Semitic propaganda a criminal offense.

In his address, the BUND delegate, Raphael Ryba, invited the Socialist parties in some of the countries where it was claimed no anti-Semitism existed to acquaint themselves with interesting documents in the possession of the BUND Coordinating Committee. He agreed with the German delegate that it is the Socialists and no other German party which should become the focal point in the struggle against rising anti-Semitism in Germany, and expressed surprise that the Social Democrats objected to the Bureau recommendations. He also regretted that the mentioned steps taken by the

German Socialists came so late; in particular, he held, the election campaign of the German Socialists should have contained more positive acknowledgment of their repudiation of anti-Semitism and their recognition of the guilt of the German people with respect to the Jews. The BUND delegate repeated his plea that the Socialist parties influencing the German occupation authorities demand that every attempt to revive Nazi anti-Semitic activities be thwarted from the outset; and that the Socialist parties introduce in the legislative bodies of their countries bills making anti-Semitism a criminal offense.

The next speaker was a delegate from France, who agreed that the German Socialists conduct a vigorous campaign against anti-Semitism. He held that the Jewish press refused to publicize these attempts by the German Socialists and called upon the meeting not to single out Germany but to concern itself with the struggle against anti-Semitism all over the world. Several other delegates took part in the discussion, among them the noted Italian Socialist and writer, Ignazio Silone, who proposed to link the struggle against anti-Semitism with that against neo-fascism.

At the conclusion of the debate Leon Blum, presiding over the gathering, proposed that the meeting acknowledge the Bureau report and take into account all proposals made during the discussion.

The same COMISCO session also unanimously adopted a BUND-sponsored resolution of protest against anti-Jewish acts of violence and discrimination in Iraq. The resolution calls upon Iraq to live up to the Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations and recognized by that country.

Executive Session of the BUND World Coordinating Committee

Last October, 1949, the Executive Session of the BUND World Coordinating Committee met in Brussels. Representatives of the BUND organizations in various countries participated. Emanuel Nowogrudsky, General Secretary of the BUND World Coordinating Committee, came from the United States, to participate in the session.

The agenda of the meeting included the following problems:

1. Reports from the Office Committee in New York and its European branch in Paris.
2. Immediate organizational tasks in the countries where BUND organizations are active.
3. Problems of a BUND organization in the State of Israel.
4. Awakening of Nazism and anti-Semitism in Germany.
5. Jewish life in the countries behind the Iron Curtain.
6. The BUND and the Socialist International.
7. The BUND and the World Congress for Jewish Culture.
8. BUND publications.
9. Finances.
10. Elections of the office committee and editorial staffs for the monthly *Unser Tsait* and the BUND Bulletin.
11. Miscellaneous.

The entire agenda was exhausted during the three-day session. The resolutions and the statements on the various questions on the agenda which are reprinted below were agreed upon unanimously. The only exception was the statement of confidence for the Executive Committee, adopted against two dissenting votes by one of the delegates. As an adherent to the BUND minority advocating a more conciliatory attitude toward the State of Israel, he wanted to emphasize his desire for a change in the BUND's position toward Israel by voting against the statement of confidence.

In general, the last session of the BUND World Coordinating Committee revealed an atmosphere of mutual confidence among the delegates from various BUND organizations, and a growing appreciation of the leadership of the World Coordinating Committee. Though less than three years passed since the First World Conference of the BUND established the World Coordinating Committee, the new organizational structure is already deeply rooted in the life of the organizations all over the world.

BUND World Coordinating Committee Resolutions

The following statements were adopted at the BUND World Coordinating Committee Executive Session, in Brussels, October 14-17, 1949:

ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

After acquainting itself with and an extensive debate on the report of the Executive Committee covering the period of one year since the Second World Conference of the BUND, the Coordinating Committee Executive Session resolves to express its deep appreciation for the Executive Committee's devoted efforts—on the basis of accepted party principles and in close contact with the local organizations—on behalf of the BUND movement throughout the world, under

the extremely difficult political and financial conditions enveloping the BUND groups throughout that period of time. These efforts helped toward the establishment of such favorable internal circumstances as will eventually permit our organizations to embark upon a fruitful course of action designed to bring about the spiritual as well as social and economic upswing of the Jewish popular masses in the countries where they are concentrated now, following the tragic destruction in Eastern Europe.

The Executive Session also wishes to emphasize its belief that, in view of the new and highly complicated present conditions of our movement, the broadest freedom of opinion compatible—in conformance with the

BUND principles—with discipline of action—a necessity which should constantly be borne in mind by every BUND member—is a necessary and desirable condition of normal and fruitful developments in our party life.

(The preceding resolution was adopted against two opposing votes; all the following statements were adopted unanimously.)

ON THE AIMS OF OUR LOCAL WORK

I.

After an extensive review of the political achievements on the part of BUND organizations and their renewed systematic attempts to implement our program of local reconstruction and the strengthening of Jewish life, a program so tragically interrupted by wartime developments in Europe, particularly in Poland, the Executive Session declares:

1. The objectively difficult conditions for such constructive efforts and the unfavorable psychological atmosphere prevailing among the Jews as a result of the Nazi crime of blatantly slaughtering six million Jews were strengthened, since the establishment of the State of Israel, by the potent nationalist wave enveloping Jewish public opinion, and by the increased Zionist tendencies which mobilized the economic and spiritual resources of the Jewish population for the Israeli state and thus deflected Jewish efforts from local duties and tasks.

2. Owing solely to the unflinching will of the BUND organizations and the unwavering belief of the BUND members in Democracy and Socialism, in the basic principles of the BUND program, and the vital forces of the Jewish popular masses in the countries of their domicile, we were able to achieve results despite the unfavorable conditions.

3. Only now may be noted within Jewish public opinion the first modest signs of a sobering-up process, of a more realistic commentary on Jewish developments—the first signs that the danger of a Zionist-nationalist *gleichschaltung*, which was truly grave at a certain time, is beginning to diminish; the beginnings of a trend, on the part of the Jewish masses, away from the dangerous illusion that the State of Israel provides the answer to all Jewish problems.

4. Far from exaggerating the importance of these first signs, the Executive Session considers it its duty to point to them and to call upon all Bundist organizations to mobilize, with even more energy and with increased tenacity, all vital forces of the Jewish working population

for an active part of the Jewish population in the struggle for Democracy and Socialism in the countries of their domicile;

for a strengthened and all-embracing Socialist upbringing of the young generation;

for incorporating the Jewish working population in the existing union and cooperative movement, and for the establishment of cooperatives of their own wherever the necessity exists;

for broad and vigorous activities to further Yiddish secular culture; for opposing assimilation; for the rights of and respect for the Yiddish language;

for the strengthening and broadening of the existing bodies of democratic Jewish communal rule; and for the establishment of new similar institutions as part of the future network of such bodies in the countries of domicile of the Jews;

for the struggle against totalitarianism in all its forms.

II.

Both BUND Conferences carefully designated the principles according to which local work was to be followed. Some of these assigned fields were successfully covered by our organizations until now. At present, when the illusion that the State of Israel would provide the solution to all Jewish problems is beginning to be rejected by large portions of the Jewish people; when great numbers of Jews, not yet completely detached from Zionist ideas, are beginning to realize that wherever Jewish popular masses dwell, Jewish life with all its ramifications and needs continues, as does, inevitably, the struggle between classes and political factions in the Jewish community; the Coordinating Committee Executive Session finds it necessary to point out:

Inasmuch as this process of awakening will continue, it opens new opportunities for our local work and brings to the foreground the problem of energetically attempting to realize the other points of our program as well.

Special emphasis ought to be placed upon the democratic-Socialist and national-cultural upbringing of the young generation; wherever possible, our organizations ought to grasp the initiative to establish secular, progressive Yiddish elementary schools, or, at least, weekend schools, permeated with the Socialist spirit.

Controlled by our organizations and supported by them, our membership should play an active part in the work of Jewish civic bodies dedicated to the task of raising the cultural, economic, or material status of the Jewish popular masses (such as, for instance, ORT, OSE, etc.), and strive to make these organizations into democratic and broadly Jewish groups.

Our organizations should actively participate in the work of the Jewish Community Councils, wherever these bodies exist, in whatever form it may be. They should take it upon themselves to establish similar democratic, autonomous Jewish bodies where they do not exist and the times are ripe for their establishment; and they should propagandize the idea of such organizations where the establishment of the bodies themselves would still be premature. These autonomous councils place our national existence on firmer ground and, in general, facilitate the achievement of our reconstruction objectives with regard to local work.

REVIVAL OF NAZISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM IN GERMANY

The Executive Session of the BUND World Coordinating Committee feels it to be its duty to draw the attention of the democratic world, and particularly of its Socialist vanguard, to the growing danger of a revival of fascism and anti-Semitism in Germany.

Despite the disastrous military defeat suffered by the entire Nazi-fascist camp which is burdened by the inhuman Hitlerite crimes and the policy of slaughtering countless human beings—a policy which had obliterated nearly the entire Jewish population of Poland and other European nations; and despite the hardships suffered by the German people themselves as a result of the lost war; world public opinion recently witnessed a series of events demonstrating that the nationalist-fascist ideology, far from being destroyed in Germany, is again rising to the surface.

As always before, we are now of the opinion that a democratic, Socialist Germany can be established only as a result of a continual, relentless fight against German nationalism and anti-Semitism, against the poison of Nazism and fascism, against all open and hidden trends of reprisal harbored by German reactionary forces. This task of re-forming Germany rests primarily upon the German Socialist movement. It is to be regretted that our hopes in this respect were not justified to a sufficient degree. Like other German groups, the German Socialists did not, during the recent parliamentary elections, oppose to the utmost the deep-rooted nationalist tendencies among the Germans; they neglected their duty to lead the struggle against anti-Semitism and failed to utilize the Socialist election platforms for this fight. The open and forceful voice against anti-Semitism recently raised in the German Parliament by the leader of the German Socialists is, however, proof of a will to correct the previous errors.

Considerable blame for the post-war development of German nationalism rests with the occupation authorities, including those of the Soviet Union, who failed to press the de-Nazification process to the last, owing to competition interests of their own, and who continue to feed in a variety of ways German nationalist sentiments and aspirations.

The entire democratic world, and first of all the international Socialist movement, must oppose the growing possibility of a revival of anti-Semitism and Nazism in Germany, and must be quick to mobilize all necessary forces to crush this terrible danger to the Jewish people and to the world as a whole.

ON OUR ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF YIDDISH CULTURE

The experiences of the past year demonstrated that, given the present sentiments of Jewish public opinion, the BUND movement and the Jewish groups remaining close to it are the only sound and active force furthering broad cultural activities in Yiddish.

As a consequence, our organizations should work most energetically in the field of Yiddish culture—more so than ever before. They should initiate the establishment of Yiddish cultural organizations both of their own and on a non-party basis wherever such organizations do not exist, and draw into these organizations the widest possible circle of members from among the Jewish working population; as well as take the most active part in existing cultural establishments.

With regard to the World Congress for Yiddish Culture—one of the most important post-war achievements in the field of Yiddish culture—the Executive Session states that the Congress, largely due to the indifference, vacillation and frequently even open animosity shown by the Zionist-minded groups in and out of the organization, failed to live up to the great expectations placed upon it at the time of its world-wide convention in New York, in 1948. Bringing to light these less known causes of the Congress' small progress in the past, our membership and organizations ought to stimulate the Congress' activities, both in its centralized work and its local agencies, even more actively than heretofore, and strive to identify the Congress with the cultural needs and desires of the Jewish popular masses.

THE BUND IN THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL

In agreement with our conviction that the fate of the Jewish people is closely related to the fate of the nations where Jews dwell, and that the future of the world depends upon the successful struggle against the dangers of war, upon a lasting peace, upon the victory of oppressed nations fighting for their national liberation—upon the realization of Democracy and Socialism—the Executive Session points out:

1. General problems of the international Socialist movement should be accorded more attention in the BUND organizations. These problems should once again occupy a prominent place in our world of ideas and should be systematically debated at membership meetings.

2. The BUND representatives in the COMISCO ought not limit themselves to bringing up Jewish questions and initiate the fight against anti-Semitism; they ought to make known their views on general Socialist problems as well.

3. Jointly with the other Socialist parties striving toward remolding the present forms of international Socialist cooperation into a true Socialist International, the BUND ought to work actively toward that goal. The BUND is dedicated to the strengthening, insofar as is only possible, of the spirit of internationalism, and is on record as favoring an independent, coordinated Socialist policy of international cooperation.

4. Among the general problems of the Socialist movement which the BUND organizations ought to take up, the following are of particular importance: the problems relating to a United Europe and the minority rights; the German problem; the problems of war and peace; and the struggle against totalitarianism in all its forms.

5. The BUND should continue to do everything possible to maintain close and friendly relations with the local Socialist parties. International Socialist conferences, the COMISCO meetings, the national conventions of the various Socialist parties, and other similar activities are occasions to strengthen and demonstrate these relations.

6. A special committee working with the New York Bureau ought to be called into existence, whose task it would be to study the complex problems of the post-war Socialist movement. The work of this committee should facilitate the adoption of official policies regarding these problems by the leading BUND authorities and should correspondingly guide the activities of the BUND representatives at the international Socialist conferences.

FRANZ KURSKY DEAD

As we were going to press, we received the news of the death of one of the oldest living BUND members, one of its pioneers, Maximilian Blumin (Franz) Kursky. Franz Kursky, who died in New York on January 17, 1950, at the age of 74, was associated with the BUND for more than fifty years. We shall bring details of his life and political activities in the next issue of the BULLETIN.

REFUGEES FROM ISRAEL

According to reports recently received by the BUND World Coordinating Committee, Jewish refugees from Israel are recently arriving in Italy in increased numbers. These people bring with them blood-curdling tales concerning conditions in Palestine camps.

Here are some of them:

One woman, T. G., told of remaining for more than seven months behind barbed wire. The mortality rate of children in these camps is catastrophic—medical services are virtually non-existent. Corruption and bribery are the order of the day, while Israeli public opinion is apparently helpless to change these abominable conditions to which tens of thousands of camp inhabitants are exposed. A number of people in the camps have gone insane as a result of hardships and frustration suffered there; an increased number of suicide attempts has been reported.

While these conditions prevail, the Israeli authorities are reluctant to grant exit visas to the many who apply for them. An exit visa is the dream of the camp inhabitants, but only those with "connections" or private funds are able to obtain one. Yet even when such exit

papers are granted, the individual is not permitted to take out of the country more than £5. A case is known when an individual was given £120 by an Israeli welfare organization prior to his leaving the country, yet when the money was found during the custom's check at the border (all refugees' belongings are X-rayed at the check points), all but £5 was taken from him.

It must be emphasized that these refugees are refused aid of any kind by Jewish agencies in Italy, such as AJDC, Hias, the Jewish Community Councils, etc. These people are considered "traitors of the Jewish cause," and their position in Italy is truly hopeless. Hungry, despondent, without anybody to turn to, their only joy is the thought that they had managed to escape from the Israeli "heaven."

The political aspects of the story are self-evident. What is particularly significant, however, is the behavior of the Jewish relief organizations, who collect millions of dollars for "humanitarian and non-partisan aid," but who think nothing of refusing to relieve the hardships of Jewish homeless wanderers who are obviously in need of a helping hand.