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# The Jewish Labor Bund



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# Bulletin

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## MAY DAY 1948

It was customary for the Jewish Labor movement under the BUND banners to issue May Day messages ever since its establishment in 1897. They were published clandestinely in Czarist-Russia, where thousands of devoted BUND members payed for their daring with imprisonment and long terms of exile in Siberia. They were proudly published in independent Poland after the First World War, circulated in hundreds of thousands of copies among the Jewish working population, who regarded them as harbingers of a new social order of Justice and Salvation, looming on the horizon of a liberated mankind. Even during the dark years of World War II, facing every day of their lives the dreary realities of annihilation and torture by the Nazi hangmen, the underground BUND resistance groups in Poland, in France, in Belgium, celebrated May Day with special messages, which tried to bring to the subjugated Jews the prospects and the unshaken belief of ultimate victory over the evil forces of Nazism, Fascism and race hatred—the ugly children of a declining capitalist way of life.

The long chain of May Day messages of the BUND reflects faithfully the history of a movement which arose a half century ago under the Czarist oppression in Russia, gained immortal glory during the revolutionary struggle for liberty and freedom of the peoples of Russia, received the overwhelming support of the majority of the 3½ million Jews of Poland, and remained faithful until the last breath of its last member to the lofty ideals of Socialism and Freedom in the heroic uprising of the Jewish ghettos

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in Warsaw, Bialystok, and other cities of Poland under Nazi subjugation.

The remnants of the Polish BUND, who escaped annihilation and who are now scattered all over the world, those who succeeded in establishing BUND organizations among the millions of Jewish workers in the United States, among the post-war Jewish communities in France, Belgium, Sweden and Italy, in the numerous countries of South America, in South Africa, Australia, Canada, and even in Palestine—are now, three years after the war ended, confronted with an entirely new situation outside and inside of the Jewish communities.

The post-war world is shaken to its foundations by the daily increasing rivalry between the old capitalist way of life and the new Socialist order emerging from the ruins of a war-wrought Europe, an order led by the British Socialist Government and supported by the majority of the British population,

which turned decisively toward Socialism and Democracy. It is our deep conviction that the Jews the world over should crave victory of the Socialist camp and support actively the fateful steps taken by the British Labor Government toward achieving its Socialist goal. The bloody reign of Nazism and Fascism made it clear that not only the human rights of the Jews, not only the prospects of their further cultural and national advancement, but their very existence is endangered as long as capitalism prevails.

Soviet Russia emerged from World War II as one of the important world powers, free from the fear of foreign intervention which for a quarter of a century dominated the life and activities of the Russian people.

The people of Russia under Stalin's rule unfortunately did not gain a well-deserved spell of quiet. Not only did the police measures inside Russia not relax as a result of the war victory, but the foreign policy of the Stalin-regime clearly relapsed to old imperialistic ways. A policy of aggrandizement, of intimidation and coercion practiced toward all the neighbor states of Russia and doomed to ever farther expansion under the disguise of establishing a communistic way of life, has already caused tremendous tension and a war-like atmosphere between the West and the East. Faced with the daily increasing conflict between the United States and Soviet Russia, a conflict which might lead to a new world war, we urge all men of good will throughout the world to unite their efforts to stop a new bloody catastrophe, to stop the aggressive policy of the Stalin regime by all means short of war, and to stop the imperialistic tendency of international capitalists as well. It is our conviction that the undisturbed peaceful cooperation of peoples and nations throughout the world can be secured and forever established only when the capitalistic United States will turn decisively toward a society of planned economy and social democracy, and the oppressive Stalin regime in Soviet Russia will be replaced by a truly democratic and socialist government.

The Communist movement in all the countries where it has established itself strives toward its dictatorship over the population. An ugly example of its aims has been shown recently in Czechoslovakia. In addition to this innate trend of the Communist movement, it has now become a promoter and ardent supporter of the aggressive foreign policy of the Stalin regime. To defeat the Communist movement with all the ideological means at our command is now

more than ever before a life necessity for true Socialists, those adhering to democratic principles.

During more than half a century of its existence, the Jewish Labor movement—the BUND—witnessed many a war between nations in Europe. During all these years we invariably condemned the wars, condemned the nationalistic and chauvinistic attitude that led to wars, and supported those Socialist elements which remained faithful to the spirit of international solidarity and a peaceful cooperation of nations. Our Socialist ideals led us to disagree sharply with those labor leaders in various countries who discarded their convictions as soon as their own nation was engaged in a bloody war. At May Day, 1948, we are in a tragic situation—a bloody war is now raging in Palestine. Faithful to our own Socialist tradition, we are calling upon all the people in Palestine to stop immediately the tragic blood-shedding. A partitioned Palestine is, in our opinion, against the true interests of both the Jews and the Arabs. An independent United Palestine organized as one common truly democratic state of the Jews and the Arabs is the real solution in accordance with the real needs of the Jews as well as the Arabs. Only the nationalistic elements within the two communities are the promoters of hatred against each other. Instead of waging a nationalistic war, the working population of the Jews and the Arabs should support the world-wide struggle for the ultimate victory of Socialism, which is the only solution answering their own needs. The true democratic forces the world over should stop the ignoble spectacle of conflicting interests playing with the lives and blood of Jews and Arabs in Palestine. We raise our voice for an immediate end of the war and a round-table conference of Jews and Arabs in Palestine, during which a real solution of their legitimate rights and needs can and must be found.

And we also wish to call once again the attention of world public opinion to the plight of the hundreds of thousands Jewish Displaced Persons in the former concentration camps of Germany, Austria and Italy. It is a shameful stain on the conscience of mankind that three years after the victorious end of the war against the evil forces of the Axis, these remnants of a population annihilated by Nazi Germany still remain in the concentration camps. There is only one solution for these unhappy victims of Nazism and Fascism: *All* countries (Palestine included) should immediately open their doors for them, so as to provide the Jewish Displaced Persons with an opportunity to start a new life according to their own wishes.

## Jewish Nation Without a Jewish State

*In the May issue of UNSER TSAIT appeared an interesting article by Professor L. Hersch, of the University of Geneva, Switzerland, dedicated to the memory of S. Mendelsohn and surveying the notion of an Independent Jewish state as it appeared in all Jewish history. Unfortunately, owing to the length of the article, it cannot be presented here in its entirety. We deem it worthwhile, however, to bring below a summary of Prof. Hersch's argument.*

There are no absolute constants in the history of mankind, but constants which are *relative* do exist. In the relative sense only can one speak of constants in the history of a people, and to clarify these constants becomes a matter not of pure theory alone, but of practical political considerations as well. These principles should, in particular, be applied to the history of the Jews.

The first and most cardinal question—whether the Jews are a nation similar to other nations—had already been raised in biblical times. Jewish assimilators claim that the Jews are not a nation at all; Jewish nationalists maintain that the Jews are a nation precisely as others. It would appear, however, that we are perhaps even more of a nation than the others: other nations need a national territory and a common language to help maintain their national consciousness. But our feeling of adherence to the Jewish community proved immeasurably stronger—we have remained Jews even though we lived for thousands of years without a territory of our own, without a state of our own, and without a common language. These then are the peculiar relative constants of our history. One of these—the place occupied in Jewish history by an independent state—is reviewed here.

Jewish history is commonly—and erroneously—thought of as consisting of two major eras, of almost equal duration: about 18 centuries of independent life in Palestine; and the following centuries constituting the Diaspora. It is assumed, in addition, that everything great and important in Jewish culture was created at the time of the Jews' independence as a separate state; and that Jewish national values declined with the decline of Jewish statehood.

Owing to the specific geographic location of Palestine—situated as it is between the valley of the Nile and that of the Tigris and Euphrates—its inhabitants could never aspire to play an important international part as a political force. But they could—and did—draw upon both the Egyptian culture and

that of Babylon and Assyria to evolve a civilization of their own, a fact which is embodied in Jewish tradition in the persons of Abraham (who came from Babylon) and Moses (who grew up in Egypt).

For several centuries the Hebrew tribes lived more or less apart from one another. But finally outside pressure—the necessity of fighting off the tall and war-minded Philistines—forced the Jews to unite and elect a common king who was to lead them in battle and ensure law and order in their land. The first attempt at unification was not very successful, but the second king, David, indeed united the Hebrew tribes and established the capital in Jerusalem. The political structure he created, the state which comprised the whole of the Jewish nation, lasted through the reign of his successor, King Solomon. Thus the time when the entire Jewish nation was united in an independent state of its own is limited to eighty years (the combined reigns of David and Solomon), or only about 2% of the period described in Jewish history. The feeling and the consciousness of our spiritual national unity had to be strong indeed to survive the following 3,000 years . . .

After King Solomon, the Jewish state split into two: Israel in the north, which led a more or less independent existence for two centuries and was finally subjugated by Assyria; and Judah in the south, including the city of Jerusalem with the Temple built by King Solomon, captured and pillaged a century and a half later by Babylon. This took place at the beginning of 600 B.C., when the history of Greek antiquity and of Europe in general was at its beginnings. No truly independent Jewish state, even one comprising part of the Jewish nation, existed since.

It is noteworthy that the most creative forces of Jewish antiquity blossomed in the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., or precisely during the decadence of the State of Judah, and even later, in Babylonian exile. Also, under the influence of the prophets, all vestiges of heathen practices, still common among the aristocracy, at the palace, and among the people at the time of Judah, finally disappeared.

The Jews apparently also lost what desire for independent statehood they possessed at about that time. After the Babylonian empire crumbled before the Persians and the Jews were permitted to return to Palestine, now one of the 27 Persian provinces, there was not a sign of revolt, not an attempt to gain political independence for the two hundred years that the Jews remained under Persian rule. The

Jews, like other peoples within the Persian empire, enjoyed far-reaching autonomous rights, and the situation changed little after the capture of Palestine by Alexander the Great and after its subsequent inclusion in the Egyptian system.

We know little about the political developments among the Jews at about that time, but the cultural attainments of this period are exceedingly important. The Old Testament was finished, its most important parts were written, and the Mosaic teachings were translated into Geek—an event of prime significance, since it delivered a staggering blow to all pagan tendencies of the times and prepared the ground for Christianity. Also, the population of Palestine grew again, and the Jews emigrated to other countries as well, such as Babylon, Egypt, Persia, the shores of the Black sea and the Mediterranean, etc.

When, however, at the beginning of the second century B.C. Palestine was included in the Assyrian empire, an attempt at Hellenization of the land was made on the part of the Assyrian Greek rulers. Heavy punishment was decreed for following the Jewish customs—and the Jews rebelled in an armed uprising, led by the Chashmenoim. It is false, however, to maintain that the uprising was aimed at the establishment of an independent state; all the Jews wanted were their internal autonomous rights. And the leaders of the rebellion were more than willing to make peace with the Assyrians under the condition that these rights were granted. But the Assyrians did not keep their promises, their empire received blow after blow from the hands of the new rulers of the Mediterranean, the Romans, and the Chashmenoim, who were allies of Rome, finally succeeded in getting rid of the Assyrians. Palestine became independent.

Palestine—but not the entire Jewish nation, for already only a fraction of the Jewish nation made its home in Palestine at that time. Besides, the real rulers of all the countries on the Mediterranean shores were already the Romans, and the independence of Palestine itself was therefore only relative. How little importance this pseudo independent state—which again lasted for about 80 years—had for the Jewish nation is seen from the weak impression it made on Jewish consciousness. The Jewish people admired and remembered the first rebels—those who fought not for the state, but for the maintenance of Jewish ways. The others are almost forgotten.

This was the last instance of an independent state in the 3½ thousand years of Jewish history. This is how little our thousand-years-old national existence remained under the sign and behind the walls of an independent state.

It might be interesting to recall the views of Jewish spiritual leaders at crucial moments of our history. Thus the prophet Samuel was outspoken against a Jewish kingdom, which was, at the time and under the circumstances, the only conceivable way of government. The later prophets were even stronger in their opposition to a Jewish state insofar as, in their opinion, it went against justice, ethics, and fairness. Thus they made it clear that an independent Jewish state was not an absolute value but a relative one; only justice in human relations was valuable in an absolute sense.

During the last days of Judah, when Jerusalem was surrounded by Babylon forces, the prophet Jeremiah did not cease thundering against social injustices prevalent in the state. He considered social reforms more important than the struggle against Babylon, and he called upon the king to surrender and upon the people to desert the battlefields. Later, after the Babylonian exile, Jews were returning to Palestine over a period of a hundred years. But the notion to establish an independent state there did not occur to them. They returned to Palestine because they felt attached to the land itself; because they wished to rebuild King Solomon's Temple; and because they wanted to live according to the Jewish tradition, to continue their cultural endeavors.

Again Jerusalem was besieged and defending itself against a formidable enemy — this time the Romans. Again no effort was being spared to defend the capital. But the great scholar of those times, Jochanan Ben Zakaj, had himself smuggled outside the city and appeared before the Roman general ... to ask and receive permission for the establishment of a Jewish academy in the city of Yavna. Treason? ... But if thousands of years afterwards a Jewish nation was still in existence—it was due to Yavna.

And now let us turn to recent Jewish history. Several thousands years later a new movement grew in Eastern Europe calling for the return of Jews to Palestine—but not to establish a Jewish state there, but simply as peasants, to live on the land. And Akhad-Om, also in Eastern Europe, called for the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish spiritual center—not a political state. Both these movements grew in the part of Europe where the Jews were living in the spirit of their age-old culture.

But in Western Europe the situation was different. Here the Dreyfuss affair in France and the anti-Semitic tendencies in Vienna drove the assimilated Jews back to Judaism. But they had little in common with Jewish religion; they knew nothing of the Heb-

new language and they were ashamed of Yiddish; Jewish culture and Jewish traditions were a closed book to them. The only notion they found to satisfy their newly-won national consciousness was the idea of a Jewish state—an aspect which was but incidental in Jewish history.

On the other hand, the Jewish Labor BUND remained true to the ages-old spirit of Jewish tradition which winds itself through the prophets, the Chashmenoim, and Jochanan Ben Zakaj—by continuing the struggle for Socialism, for freedom, and for autonomy of the Jewish people in the realm of its national culture. The prophets naturally did not use the expression "socialism," "political freedom," and "national-cultural autonomy;" but the sense remained the same.

And thus it appears that an independent state has a different value for various peoples under varying circumstances. Its value is measured by geographic and demographic considerations; by the state's inner structure; by the fraction of the nation it comprises; and by its political environment. Likewise, one must not forget that there are serious drawbacks to any state: the necessity for maintaining a police force, an army, a diplomatic corps draws upon and diminishes the intellectual and moral as well as the material resources of the nation. This is generally true, and it is in particular true regarding the Jewish nation.

Only an estrangement from our old traditions and from the spirit of our heritage, aided by specific circumstances of history, have contributed to the present Jewish state of mind in which our generation makes of the idea of an independent Jewish state a fetish, an absolute, a heathen god before whom everything must fall and everybody must kneel.

"And even though I am not worthy to be counted among the most insignificant disciples of our old spiritual leaders I consider it my duty to raise my weak voice to warn my people against this dangerous fetish which must lead toward the worst national catastrophe."

"What our people really needs \* \* \* is an internal autonomy, the chance to live free as Jews, in their own national culture and according to their own national tradition, under a rule of freedom and social justice \* \* \* The forms and the contents of the internal autonomy must of necessity be different in different times and in different countries. In our own times, the rule of freedom and of social justice can be only a regime of Socialism, democracy, and international understanding."

"This is true with regard to Palestine, and this is also true regarding other countries where large groups of the Jewish people dwell."

## Behind the Iron Curtain

(News from Poland)

After the declaration of March 18, 1948, by J. Cyrankiewicz, the Polish Prime Minister and also Secretary-General of the Polish Socialist Party, to the effect that the Polish Socialist movement would shortly renounce its independent existence and that the Polish Socialists decided to break all ties with the international Socialist conferences and with Socialists in the West in general, the Polish BUND likewise sent a letter to the World Coordinating Committee of Bundist and Jewish Socialist Organizations, dated March 21, 1948, and in which the following declaration was enclosed:

### Declaration of the BUND in Poland

"As a result of the conference held in Brussels in May, 1947, Bundist organizations in various countries formed a Coordinating Committee which, with the Polish BUND, declared in June, 1947, in Zurich, its participation in the International Socialist Confer-

ence there. The part of the Polish BUND in the forming of the Coordinating Committee and in the international Socialist conferences was motivated by the conviction that we would thus help in realizing the principles of Revolutionary Socialism both within the framework of the BUND movement in various countries and on the international Socialist forum. The practice of the past few months, however, showed that the ideological and political differences between the Polish BUND and the majority of other Bundist organizations, which are ideologically tied to the Socialist parties in Western Europe, are becoming continuously more pronounced. These differences came to light in a particularly drastic manner—and were particularly painful to us, Jewish Socialists active in a country where six million Jews had been massacred by Hitlerite Germany—at the Socialist Conference in Antwerp. Most of the Western European de-

legations, and with them the part of the BUND delegation ideologically and politically tied to the Western European parties, found it possible to advocate admission of the German Social Democrats into the international Socialist fold. These delegations refused to consider the fact that the policy of the German Social Democrats is contrary to the principles of international Socialism; that it is a policy of nationalist chauvinism and of remaining passive to anti-Semitic tendencies; and that it is inimical to the cause of world peace owing to its revisionist attitude regarding the question of the Polish-German border.

"Since that time we are observing the development of most of the Western European Socialists with mounting apprehension. Their policies are becoming more and more one of the factors which increase the split in the ranks of the working class. They see the enemy primarily in the leftist elements, and they are consequently building together with the *bourgeoisie* an anti-Communist front under the slogan of a so-called "third force." These policies lead to a formidable anti-Communist and anti-Soviet campaign and make it possible for the international capitalist forces to employ the Socialist movement as a temporary ally in the struggle against the newly forming Socialist order—this despite the fact that the anti-Communist campaign serves, in its social significance, simply as a weapon in the class struggle against the realization of socialism. -

"The policies of most of the Western European Socialist parties place upon the shoulders of the Socialist movement the co-responsibility for bringing the international situation to a point of tension which now directly threatens the peace of the world. Thus these policies support, the forming of military alliances, promote the reconstruction plans of a capitalist Germany, and agree to the intentions of the Marshall Plan to meddle in the affairs of Western Europe by giving support to reactionary *bourgeois* governments. This political trend of most of the Socialist parties in Western Europe leads not toward cementing labor unity, but rather to increase the split within the labor ranks.

"The attitude of the British Labor Government which made it impossible for the delegates of the Czechoslovak Social Democratic Party, the Polish Socialist Party, and the Polish BUND to attend the meeting of the International Socialist Committee in London on March 19, 1948; and the adoption at this meeting of discriminatory resolutions against these left-wing Socialist parties—finally put an end to all possible collaboration of these parties through the expediency of international Socialist conferences.

"Under the circumstances, the Central Committee of the BUND in Poland, at its plenary session on March 21, 1948, resolved to withdraw the participation of the Polish BUND both from the Coordinating Committee of Bundist Organizations and from the international Socialist conferences. The World Coordinating Committee of Bundist Organizations is thus no longer empowered to represent the Polish BUND on the international Socialist forum.

Signed: Central Committee of the BUND  
in Poland."

The Executive Bureau of the Coordinating Committee, at its meeting held on April 8, 1948, resolved to postpone the framing of a reply to the Polish BUND Central Committee until after the conclusion of the Executive Plenary Session to which the matter will be presented during the next scheduled meeting, on June 10, 1948, in Brussels.

The Executive Bureau also decided to distribute copies of the Polish BUND letter and declaration to all affiliated organizations, and to limit its own comment, to be included in the letter, to the following:

"Without engaging in a political discussion with the BUND in Poland, we wish to point out that the instances cited by the Central Committee of the BUND in Poland do not correspond to the actual facts. On the background of political developments in Poland after March 18, when Premier Cyrankiewicz forecast the liquidation of the Socialist Party through a merger with the Communists, it becomes clear that the decision of the Polish BUND to withdraw from the Coordinating Committee was made under pressure of force."

## The Inside Story

We are now in a position to bring here but a few details regarding the true situation in Poland, the pressure of which has caused the Polish BUND Central Committee to adopt its decision of withdrawal from the international bodies.

The decision of the BUND Central Committee regarding the withdrawal from the BUND Coordinating Committee and the attached declaration were adopted *in the name* of the Central Committee on March 21, 1948. The plenary session of the Central Committee, which accepted the decision, did not take place, however, until April 3, 1948, in Wroclaw, immediately preceding the opening of the National Conference there.

At the BUND National Conference in Wroclaw held on April 3 and 4, a considerable number of

delegates was against breaking relations with the Coordinating Committee and against the proposals of the Polish BUND Central Committee. This attitude, however, was not allowed to come to the surface. Owing to the circumstances now prevailing in Poland, the resolution of the Central Committee was adopted unanimously.

More than 60 delegates took part in the National Conference in Wroclaw. In many localities only those party members could be elected delegates to the Conferences who declared in advance that they were in accord with the viewpoint of the Central Committee regarding the withdrawal from the Coordinating Committee. Some delegates to the Conference were called to the UB (Polish Political Police) even before embarking for Wroclaw. The UB is accurately informed about everything going on inside the Polish BUND.

At the opening of the Conference on April 3, it was already known that more than 200 active members of the Polish Socialist Party—those disliked by the UB—had been imprisoned. A public mass trial, with all the consequences of such action, is being prepared against these Polish Socialist leaders and against other presumably "reactionary" elements. This

trial is to be the crowning point of the liquidation activities initiated against the Polish Socialist movement. In the course of a Communist Party membership meeting, Zachariasz, a notorious leader of the Jewish Communists in Poland, reportedly stated that the BUND would not be collectively accepted into the Communist Party. Every BUND member would have to be accepted as an individual; and everybody would have to undergo a close scrutiny to determine whether his political views are acceptable. The test would presumably be a declaration prepared by the Communists, which every BUND member would be required to sign.

The Zionist groups in Poland are likewise very depressed. They appear to understand that their turn would come after the liquidation of the BUND.

The Palestine question was also debated at the BUND Conference in Wroclaw. However, in this connection the Conference was also not allowed to adopt a view other than the one held by the P.P.R. (Communist Party), since any different view would have been interpreted as opposing the official view of the Polish Government—which the BUND cannot do.

## One Year After the World Conference of the BUND in Brussels

The first world conference of the Jewish Labor BUND convened in Brussels during the week of May 3rd to May 11th, 1947. It is now a year since this conference brought together the BUND organizations and groups in a single coordinating body called Coordinating Committee of Bundist and Affiliated Jewish Socialist Organizations in Various Countries, with headquarters in New York and a European Secretariat in Paris.

During the first year of its existence the BUND Coordinating Committee had necessarily been compelled to devote its main efforts to the difficult task of establishing the contacts with the various BUND organizations, as well as of winning for itself a proper place in Jewish public opinion at large, and among the BUND organizations in particular. A world organization of the BUND was a rather new achievement, which was at first slow in winning support and acknowledgment. In addition, there was the hard work of rebuilding and organizing the various offices

of the world organization before they could commence their activities.

Only one year elapsed since the creation of the World Coordinating Committee in Brussels. Even though the time is perhaps too short to draw conclusions, one can see that the new form of the BUND's activities has already yielded some results and that the whole idea of a world organization of the Jewish Labor movement embodied in a mutual coordinating committee became deeply rooted in the awareness of the Jewish communities throughout the world.

The very existence of the BUND Coordinating Committee and the first steps taken by this international body led to a substantial increase in the activities of the BUND organizations in various countries. Especially noteworthy is the growth during this year of the BUND Organizations in France and in Belgium. In both countries thousands of new sympathizers joined the ranks of the BUND Organizations and its youth branches. A new active spirit

against the Zionist and Communist trends in the Jewish communities of France and Belgium made itself felt among the BUND membership in those countries.

Of great importance was also the growth of BUND activities in the countries of South America since the founding of the Coordinating Committee. In Argentina, where the Jewish community numbers 500,000 people, the BUND Organization, for the first time since the Jews emigrated into Argentina, participated in the 1947 elections of a board of deputies for the Jewish Community Council in Buenos Aires and, what is more, won a majority of the electorate for its progressive slate of candidates, bitterly opposed by the Zionists.

During the first year of its existence, the BUND Coordinating Committee spared no efforts to call the attention of the world to the plight and the appalling conditions of the Jewish Displaced Persons in the former concentration camps of Germany, Austria, and Italy. Representatives of the World Coordinating Committee took the initiative to propose at the International Socialist Conferences in 1947 in Zurich and Antwerp—and were instrumental in influencing the Socialist delegates to accept—resolutions calling on all democratic governments to open the doors of their respective countries for the victims of Nazism and Fascism and to provide them with all necessary means to start productive life anew. Owing to the efforts of the World Coordinating Committee and the BUND Organizations in France and Belgium, many hundreds of Jewish inhabitants of the concentration camps in Germany and Austria were granted visas to settle down for a new start in life in France, Belgium, Sweden, Norway and in some countries overseas. In this connection we should mention the memorandum to the United Nations on the Displaced Persons problem, which was submitted to the Secretary General of the United Nations on behalf of the World Coordinating Committee of the BUND in the Summer of 1947. Needless to say that the Coordinating Committee continually remained in contact with the thousands of Bundists among the Jewish Displaced Persons in the concentration camps and tried to supply them with help and advice.

During the first year of its existence the Executive Council of the Coordinating Committee held two meetings. Among other matters they were devoted to the complex task of clarifying the anti-Zionist attitude of the BUND in connection with the international steps taken by the UN with regard to the Palestine problem. The last and decisive effort in this connec-

tion was left to the second World Conference of the BUND Organizations, scheduled to take place in September and October, 1948, in New York.

The BUND Coordinating Committee was successful in assuring for the Jewish Labor movement its rightful place in the international Socialist family. The decision of the International Socialist Conference in Antwerp in November 1947, which finally voted by an overwhelming majority to accept the international BUND as a member of the International Socialist Conferences, was met with satisfaction and joy in all BUND Organizations by many thousands of Bundists who were raised in the spirit of international Socialism.

At the end of this fateful year of its existence the World Coordinating Committee of the BUND received word that the BUND in Poland decided to sever its connections with the Coordinating Committee. There is no doubt in our minds that this regretful step was a result of Communist coercion aiming to liquidate the last vestiges of an independent Socialist movement in Poland. It is obvious that the BUND in Poland, in a country where only 60,000 Jews out of 3,500,000 are now living, was in no position to defend itself against this brutal act. Of course, the BUND did not bring this reason in its decision on leaving the ranks of the International BUND. The motive which led the Polish BUND—as its own declaration expressed it to withdraw from the international BUND body was its inability to influence the policy of the BUND organizations united in the Coordinating Committee.

With the unshaken belief in our ideals, devoted to the cause of Democracy, Socialism, and the international brotherhood of peoples, we are now entering our second year of existence.



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