

Answers  
Palestine  
1947

**A N S W E R S**  
**ON THE**  
**PALESTINE QUESTION**

*By*  
**CARL HERMANN VOSS**



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*on the*  
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**T**HIS pamphlet is based upon an article by Dr. Voss entitled "Questions and Answers on the Palestine Problem," which appeared in the September 1946 issue of "The Woman's Press," the national magazine for Young Women's Christian Associations.

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## ***What's all the shooting about in Palestine?***

The headlines would lead us to believe that the military activities of the British in Palestine are designed solely to maintain law and order. Therefore, the newspapers intimate, British Tommies risk their lives to hunt out hidden stores of arms, break the power of the Haganah (the Jewish resistance movement) and prevent "illegal" immigration of Jews to Palestine. An impartial observer, who has even slight knowledge of the background of the Palestine question, realizes, however, that the fundamental laws of justice and human decency are being violated not by the Jews, but by the British, and that resistance is the inevitable reaction of a freedom-loving, desperate people.

It is clear that the British have imperial interests at stake. There is a frantic effort on their part to cow the Jewish population into submission and to assure the Arabs that they do not intend to take a more pro-Zionist stand. Jewish leaders have been arrested, mistreated, and then thrown into concentration camps. On the other hand, that notorious Arab war criminal and miscreant, Haj Amin el Husseini, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem, was allowed to escape from Europe to the Middle East to foment more trouble and give the British an added excuse for their presence as "arbiter" in Palestine. Meanwhile the British delude themselves into thinking this appeasement of the Arab nations safeguards British oil interests in the Middle East and strengthens the lifeline of the Empire.

The Jewish resistance movement presents a striking parallel to the Sinn Fein rebellion of the Irish a generation ago and to the civil disobedience practiced by the nationalist movement in India in more recent years. In both Ireland and India—as in Palestine, Greece, and Indonesia—the British have permitted imperial interests to take precedence over considerations of justice. They have exhibited singular lack of understanding in their administration and have thus lost the confidence of progressives and liberals throughout the world. The outbursts of violence and sporadic terrorist acts in Palestine are inevitable.

## **Why doesn't the Jewish Agency suppress terror?**

The leaders of the Jewish Agency, including the distinguished Dr. Chaim Weizmann and the stalwart David Ben-Gurion, sincerely deplore violence both on the part of their own people and on the part of the British. The recent World Zionist Congress in Basle passed a resolution condemning terrorist activities. But Zionists, both individually and collectively, have warned the British that if military action against the Jews continues and if Jewish immigration to Palestine is prevented, *nothing* can be done to restrain the violence of passionate youth who refuse to see the hopeless survivors of Nazi extermination turned back from the gates of the Homeland made sacred to them by centuries of history and promised them by international agreement. As a result of the fact that the international commitments made to the Jewish people, with respect to Palestine as their national homeland, are totally repudiated, some Jews have reached the end of their patience. Terrorism achieves nothing of constructive value; but by it, the Jewish extremists have served notice that they will not passively submit to a proposed division of their homeland, and a permanent closing of the doors. For the Jews of Europe, the issue is now Palestine or death. For the Jews of Palestine, it is a case of liberty or death.

Britain's solemn commitments, the tragic need of European Jews, the fine war record of Palestinian Jewry in contrast to the pro-Axis sympathy of the Arab nations—all are forgotten by the British in their desire to keep a tenuous hold on the Mediterranean. The British are still practising their pre-war appeasement policy. They enforce the 1939 White Paper on Palestine which is in direct violation of the internationally guaranteed commitments by virtue of which alone the British control Palestine.

## **How did the British receive the right to determine policy in Palestine?**

In 1920, at the San Remo Conference, the Allied Nations decided that the Mandate for Palestine should be granted to Great Britain—a decision which was carried out in

1922. The Mandate (i.e. the trusteeship) clearly made the mandatory power "responsible for putting into effect" the Balfour Declaration issued by the British Government on November 2, 1917 "and adopted by the other Allied Powers in favor of the establishment in Palestine of a National Home." The Mandate made this general pledge more specific: it committed Britain to encouraging Jewish immigration into Palestine, bringing about close settlement of Jews on the land there, and placing Palestine "under such political, administrative and economic conditions as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home." These were the pledges which the British flagrantly broke when the Colonial Office issued the 1939 White Paper on Palestine.

### **What was the 1939 British White Paper on Palestine?**

In the spring of 1939, the Chamberlain Government, through the then Colonial Secretary, Malcolm MacDonald, issued a White Paper on Palestine which set a maximum of 75,000 for future Jewish immigration. The status of the Jews was thus to be reduced to that of a permanent minority, frozen at about one-third of the total population of Palestine. The White Paper further limited the right of the Jews to purchase land, to an area comprising only about five per cent of the total land area of Palestine. The settlement of Jews in other parts of the country was surrounded with restrictive, discriminatory regulations. The White Paper proposed to set up within ten years a Palestine State which would be an Arab State since the Arabs would, by constitution, remain a majority. The White Paper repudiated the essence of the Balfour Declaration. It stood in defiance of the opinion rendered in June 1939 by the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations, which declared the White Paper to be in contravention of the Palestine Mandate as interpreted throughout all the years of its existence. It violated democratic doctrine in that it discriminated against the Jews on grounds of descent and creed. In the light of the tragic situation of the Jews in the world as of this hour, the British policy in Palestine, based on this White Paper of 1939, is nothing less than *inhuman*.

## ***Was not Palestine promised to the Arabs as well?***

No, this legend has been disproved time and again. When during the first world war British spokesmen promised the Arabs national self-determination, Palestine was specifically excluded from the pledges. This has been confirmed by the chief British negotiator, Sir Henry McMahon, and was agreed to by the Arab leaders at the time. The promise to the Arabs has been fulfilled. They have independence in six lands, totalling more than a million square miles.

Little Palestine with its 10,500 square miles west of the Jordan, represents only one per cent of the Arab lands, many of which are strikingly underpopulated. The promise to the Jews has hardly met the same favorable fate as the promise to the Arabs.

## ***Did not the Balfour Declaration envisage only a spiritual and cultural center for Jews?***

The idea that the Balfour Declaration originally authorized only a small spiritual and cultural center in Palestine is flatly contradicted by the record. The statesmen most intimately connected with the issuance of the Balfour Declaration—Lord Balfour, Woodrow Wilson, David Lloyd George, Jan Christian Smuts, Viscount Herbert Samuel—have all given clear testimony to the fact that a Jewish Commonwealth or State was the ultimate objective.

Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister of Great Britain at the time the Balfour Declaration was issued, has recorded in unmistakable terms what was in the mind of his Cabinet when they decided to issue the Declaration. He wrote:

On the other hand, it was contemplated that when the time arrived for according representative institutions to Palestine, if the Jews had meanwhile responded to the opportunity afforded them by the idea of a National Home and had become a definite majority of the inhabitants, then Palestine would thus become a Jewish Commonwealth. The notion that Jewish immigration would have to be artificially restricted in order to ensure that the Jews should be a permanent minority never entered into the heads of anyone engaged in framing the policy. That would have been regarded as unjust and as a fraud on the people to whom we were appealing.

The Jewish Commonwealth idea remained part of British policy even after the conciliatory approach to the Arabs of Mr. Churchill's White Paper of 1922 which separated Transjordan from Palestine. The Palestine Royal Commission Report (1937) points out: "Though the phraseology of the 1922 White Paper was clearly intended to conciliate, as far as might be possible, Arab antagonism to the National Home, there is nothing in it to prohibit the ultimate establishment of the Jewish State, and Mr. Churchill himself told us in evidence that no such prohibition was intended."

There is incontrovertible evidence that the American Government, which participated in the formulation of the Balfour Declaration, also understood it to intend the ultimate establishment of a Jewish State. This is indicated in President Wilson's statement, made on March 2, 1919 to a group of Jewish leaders: "I am persuaded that the Allied Nations, with the fullest concurrence of our Government and our people, are agreed that in Palestine shall be laid the foundations of a Jewish Commonwealth."

This statement reflected the view of the Intelligence Section attached to the American delegation to the Peace Conference, which in January 1919, made a comprehensive recommendation for the settlement of Near East problems. Full provision was made for Arab aspirations for independence in Syria, Mesopotamia, and Arabia. As to Palestine, the recommendation read:

That the Jews be invited to return to Palestine and settle there, being assured by the Conference of all proper assistance in so doing that may be consistent with the protection of the personal (especially the religious) and the property rights of the non-Jewish population, and being further assured that it will be the policy of the League of Nations to recognize Palestine as a Jewish State as soon as it is a Jewish State in fact.

### ***Is it true that the Arabs never accepted the Balfour Declaration?***

The allegation that the Arabs have never accepted the Balfour Declaration is wrong in the light of statements

made as far back as 1919 by no less an authoritative spokesman than Emir Feisal, commander of the Arabian forces during the Arab revolt against the Turks and head of the Arab delegation at the peace table. On January 3, 1919, an agreement was signed between Emir Feisal acting on behalf of the Arab Kingdom of Hedjaz, and Dr. Chaim Weizmann, representing and acting on behalf of the Zionist Organization, "mindful of the racial kinship and ancient bonds existing between the Arabs and the Jewish people, and realizing that the surest means of working out the consummation of their national aspirations is through the closest possible collaboration in the development of the Arab State and Palestine."

Article III of this Agreement provided explicitly that "In the establishment of the Constitution and Administration of Palestine all such measures shall be adopted as will afford the fullest guarantees for carrying into effect the British Government's Declaration of November 2, 1917."

Article IV read "All necessary measures shall be taken to encourage and stimulate immigration of Jews into Palestine on a large scale, and as quickly as possible to settle Jewish immigrants upon the land through closer settlement and intensive cultivation of the soil. In taking such measures the Arab peasant and tenant farmers shall be protected in their rights, and shall be assisted in forwarding their economic development."

During the Paris Peace Conference Emir Feisal wrote on March 1, 1919 in a letter to Felix Frankfurter, now Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court:

The Arabs, especially the educated among us, look with deepest sympathy on the Zionist movement. . . . Our deputation here in Paris is fully acquainted with the proposals submitted yesterday by the Zionist Organization to the Peace Conference,\* and we regard them as moderate and proper. We will do our best insofar as we are concerned, to help them in their attainment; we will wish the Jews a hearty welcome home.

With the chiefs of your movement, especially with

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\*The Zionist proposals are on record; they included the Jewish claim to Palestine on the basis of historical connection and clearly provided for free Jewish immigration and colonization in Palestine.

Dr. Weizmann, we have had, and continue to have, the closest relations. He has been a great helper in our cause, and I hope the Arabs may soon be in a position to make the Jews some return for their kindness. We are working together for a reformed and revived Near East, and our two movements complete one another. The Jewish Movement is national and not imperialist. Our Movement is national and not imperialist, and there is room in Syria for us both. Indeed, I think that neither can be a real success without the other.

### ***Isn't Palestine an Arab country?***

Palestine is not, and never has been an Arab land, although, as the battleground of many warring nations for many centuries, it has been included in several Arab empires. But it has never been an independent Arab state.

On the other hand, Palestine has played a singular role in the history of the Jews for more than three thousand years. It was their land (without reservations) from the time of Joshua's conquest in 1300 B.C., through the periods of the First and Second Temples, and long after the Roman conquest of Jerusalem in 63 A.D. Through the fourth century they continued to be the majority of the population of Palestine; and, despite invasions and changes of rule, very large numbers of them remained in the country until the First Crusade in 1096 almost wiped them out. In the years between that period and the beginning of modern resettlement by Jews in the early nineteenth century, they continued to come to Palestine in groups of hundreds and thousands despite the legion of difficulties in their way.

The Jews have never relinquished their historic claim to the land, a claim that was specifically acknowledged in the Mandate for Palestine and accepted by the entire civilized world after the last war.

The Arab conquest of Palestine took place in 634 A.D. and Arabs ruled Palestine only till 1071. Thus, never in the last 876 years has rule by Arabs existed in Palestine. The invaders had brought with them only small groups of Arabs and the Arab population of Palestine was never large until Jewish resettlement began making the land attractive to the inhabitants of neighboring countries. Indeed, Palestine,

in the last few centuries, was notable for the sparseness and constant decline of its population, which totaled no more than 300,000 in 1882, the year when organized Jewish colonization commenced. Only about half of that number were Arabs. The great majority of the present Arab population of Palestine are either recent immigrants themselves or descendants of persons who immigrated into Palestine during the last sixty-five years.

It should be added that in the years between the Arab conquest and the beginning of the Jewish return, Palestine was laid waste, its ancient canal and irrigation projects were destroyed, and its Biblical fertility vanished. The rehabilitation of Palestine has taken place under the careful planning and courageous colonization of the Jews after centuries of Arab neglect.

### ***Have the Arabs been displaced from the land?***

Many of the Arabs in Palestine today, as we have seen, are descendants of people who have come there largely as a result of what Zionism has done for that part of the world.

Only seven per cent of Palestine west of the Jordan has been bought by the Jews. According to the report of the Palestine Royal Commission, 664 Arab families had actually been displaced in close to two decades. Of their number only one half accepted an offer of rural resettlement under superior conditions. The remaining number had found other land holdings or jobs.

The general beneficent effect of Jewish immigration on Arab welfare is evidenced by the fact that the increase in the Arab population—it has doubled from 600,000 to 1,200,000 in the past twenty-five years—and the improvement of its standard of life have been most marked in areas affected by Jewish development. The more Jews come to Palestine, the more room there will be for Arabs to migrate into Palestine and to increase the number of Arabs already there. Under the Mandate the Arab agriculturalists increased from 400,000 people to 700,000—all at a much higher standard of living. In 1920 the Arabs cultivated about 5 million dunams in contrast to the 7 million dunams under their care today.

## ***Has Palestine room for more immigrants?***

There is abundant room in Palestine for both Jews and Arabs in great numbers. Palestine can accommodate at least between three and four million more people, as shown in surveys made by such an eminent agronomist as W. C. Lowdermilk, Assistant Chief of the United States Bureau of Soil Conservation. Jewish colonists have transformed large stretches of Palestine from a desert into a garden spot. They have proved Palestine to have great economic potentialities, if only soil reclamation, irrigation and industrialization are encouraged by the governing power.

## ***What was the contribution of Palestinian Jewry to World War II?***

The progress and technical development brought by Jews to Palestine made it possible for that country, despite its small area and population and limited resources, to fulfill important functions on behalf of the Allied Nations during the war. By the end of 1943, 70 per cent of the Jewish population was occupied in military service or civilian capacities pertaining to the war. Production for military needs reached its peak in 1942, during the Allied campaign in North Africa. Factories worked day and night. Army lorries took the finished products straight to the front line. Barbed wire, air compressors, machine-gun parts, engine tanks, fire extinguishers, etc. were manufactured in spite of the fact that many of these items had not previously been produced by Jewish industry. Tents and tarpaulins, canvas and hospital tents were produced in great quantities; furs for pilots, flying vests and fur gloves, life saving outfits, silk for parachutes were produced for the R.A.F.

A former British Commercial Agent wrote: ". . . I wonder how many people know that every one of the millions of land mines used in the brilliant campaign, which retrieved the situation at El Alamein from imminent complete disaster and ended by 'knocking Rommel for six', were manufactured in Palestine. . . ."

Jewish engineers, architects, building contractors and workers from Palestine were active all over the Middle East.

Those responsible for military security were able to rest assured that any construction plans entrusted to the Jews would not pass into enemy hands—an eventuality of which they could be far from sure in the case of the Arabs, who remained indifferent or hostile to the Allied cause during the war.

Increasing demands were made upon Palestinian agriculture so that it was called upon to supply products formerly imported for the civilian population, as well as meet the requirements of the ever-growing armies. Highly valuable shipping space was saved for more urgent military needs by Palestine's ability to replace imports through increased production.

The mobilization of Jewish man-power in Palestine was not state-directed. Recruiting for military services was voluntary, and no workers were drafted into their occupations. Yet the Jewish *voluntary* enlistments in the army numbered almost 30,000, which by ratio of population would have meant a voluntary (not drafted) enlistment in the United States of more than 12 million. The Arabs in Palestine did not respond with the same enthusiasm. Their enlistment rate was about 9,000 from a population twice as large, and a large proportion of their recruits deserted.

From 1940 to V-Day, Jewish industry supplied the Allies with goods in the aggregate amount of about 160 million dollars. It is estimated that the output of Jewish agriculture expanded by 70 per cent during the war years. Considering the area and population of Palestine, this is an amazing record.

### ***Won't there be a Holy War in Palestine?***

The threat of a Holy War comes in large part from Arab countries outside of Palestine. In none of these Arab countries is there the capacity to produce a single truck, tank, machine gun, airplane, submarine, or ship of war. As a matter of fact, the Arab countries owe their independence and prestige to the clash of big-power politics rather than to any material power which they themselves exercise. They depend economically on the western powers as well; hence Ibn Saud, for example, has recently made it clear in an

interview for the *New York Times* of December 2, 1946, that "despite the differences that have arisen in points of view over Palestine, King Ibn Saud has never even considered canceling or voiding the oil concessions that are being developed in this country by United States companies." The major part of Ibn Saud's revenue comes from these oil concessions, as Harold Ickes noted recently.

Egypt, by far the largest and most wealthy of the Arab countries, has a population of sixteen and a half million people. It has an army which totals about 52,000 ill-trained, ill-equipped men—an army which, from the point of view of a campaign under modern conditions, could not carry on for a day. Saudi Arabia, in turn, has an army which consists of horsemen who might have been an effective threat in medieval days but hardly constitute a striking force at the present time.

The Jews, however, have a strongly-armed, well-disciplined defense army (Haganah). Perhaps the clearest analysis of the Holy War threat has been made by two Labor members of Parliament, Richard H. S. Crossman and Michael Foot, in a little pamphlet widely circulated in England under the title of *A Palestine Munich*. Messrs. Foot and Crossman write of the Arab powers: "All these armies together amount to no more than five poorly organized and equipped divisions with virtually no air support, and they are separated from each other by distances ranging from 500 to 1200 miles of desert and mountains. This does not exclude considerable guerrilla warfare in Palestine . . . a proposition very different from an Arab 'Holy War' against the British."

The lesson of the past twenty-five years in Palestine has been that an Arab uprising occurs when Arab agitators feel that the "Government is with them." Even now in the winter of 1946-1947, the Palestine Administration has not lifted a finger to stop a wave of murders of moderate Arabs by extremists, nor to stop the Arab illegal armies from parading and drilling. Arab leaders exiled for their part in the 1936 Riots have been allowed to return. They are now openly threatening and organizing violence, and conferring in Egypt with that chief fomenter of bloodshed in Palestine, the ex-Mufti of Jerusalem. The latter, despite a conspicuous

collaborationist record during the war, was never brought to trial as a war criminal and managed to elude both French and British vigilance and to return to the Middle East.

### ***What is the status of European Jewry today?***

Before the beginning of World War II, the Jews of Europe numbered about eight and a half million, several hundred thousands of whom had already begun to feel the effect of Hitler's anti-Jewish hatred. The expulsion of Jews from Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia was only a dress rehearsal for the holocaust to come. During six years of war, the Nazis nearly succeeded in exterminating all the Jews of Europe, putting to death more than six million hapless victims by gas, electricity, starvation, and tortures of incredible savagery. Only a million and a half European Jews survived the war,\* and this pitiable remnant was left penniless and homeless. Earl Harrison, Dean of the University of Pennsylvania Law School, went to Europe in 1945, at the request of President Truman, to survey the plight of Jewish displaced persons interned in camps of Germany and Austria. On his return, Harrison told in graphic terms of the poverty, misery, and despair of those who managed to outlive Hitler's pogroms, and recommended immediate immigration to Palestine of 100,000 Jewish displaced persons.

### ***Why don't they stay in Europe?***

The future of the Jews in Europe is virtually hopeless. In spite of the fact that their numbers are so greatly diminished, they find it impossible to re-establish themselves there. Their homes are blasted to bits. Jobs are non-existent. There is no possibility of regaining status. They are understandably reluctant to return to such cemeteries of their people as Poland where, of a three and a half million Jewish population, more than three million were killed. As the

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\*Close to a million European Jews managed to escape to Palestine, the Americas, and many other lands in the period following Hitler's rise to power.

most decisive factor of all, the poison of Hitlerite anti-Semitism has done its work all too well. In Eastern and Central Europe anti-Semitism is fiercer and stronger now than ever before. Even where governments, as in Poland, are determined to stamp it out, recurrent pogroms, murder, and intimidation are directed against the few tens of thousands of survivors. The inevitable result has been a large-scale spontaneous exodus of Jews from Poland and other East European countries to the American-occupied zone of Germany which they regard as a stopping place on their way out of Europe. In the overwhelming majority of cases their ultimate goal is Palestine.

### ***Precisely how many of these European Jews want to go to Palestine?***

It is conservatively estimated by experts that, of the Jews remaining in Europe, at least 60 per cent—or 800,000—wish to emigrate to Palestine now. Of the more than 250,000 Jews in concentration camps, more than 90 per cent have begged to be allowed to go to Palestine immediately. Scores of newspaper correspondents and observers have attested to these facts, but the most reliable testimony is probably that of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine. The members of that group recognized the hopeless future for Jews in Europe, and on May 1, 1946 recommended that a hundred thousand European Jews be granted entry to Palestine at once. But Great Britain chose to ignore this recommendation. Now, months later—more than a year and a half after the end of the war—the Jews of Europe still suffer, and their plea to be allowed to go to Palestine falls on deaf ears. It will be remembered that when asked by the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry where they wanted to go if the doors of Palestine were permanently locked against them, the Jewish D.P.'s (i.e. Displaced Persons) in the detention camps shouted: "The crematorium. If we are not allowed to go to Palestine, then we choose death."

## **What has happened to the recommendations of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry?**

Bartley Crum and other members of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry have testified that Mr. Bevin promised to implement the Committee's findings if they were unanimous. This promise was instantly broken.

Immediately upon the publication of the Report by the British Government, Mr. Attlee stated that it would not be carried out unless the Jewish self-defense were liquidated and the United States Government pledged itself to send military forces to Palestine if necessary. The first condition (liquidation of Haganah) had been considered by the Committee itself and rejected after careful consideration. The second condition (American forces) had also been indirectly considered and disavowed by the Committee, for it had heard expert evidence from British generals in Palestine to the effect that the Jewish community was perfectly capable of defending itself against any violence by the Arabs in or out of Palestine.

Despite President Truman's reiteration in the fall of 1946 of his desire that the 100,000 be transferred to Palestine and despite the tragic deterioration in the position of Jewish displaced persons in Europe, not a single step has been taken to transfer them to Palestine.

Christians everywhere should be profoundly concerned about this attempted betrayal of the Jewish people especially because the official British proposals on Palestine made last summer in the form of the so-called Morrison-Grady plan and this winter in the form of Mr. Bevin's suggestions to the Anglo-Arab Conference on Palestine, both use the 100,000 displaced persons as hostages to extort from the Jewish people acceptance of an unjust political formula for a federalized Palestine. These two plans would leave practically all power in the hands of a central British Administration and confine Jewish land settlement to a tiny area of the country.

Since both Arabs and Jews rejected these proposals, Mr. Bevin in February 1947 stated his decision to refer the Palestine question to the Assembly of the United Nations



Aerial view of Nahalal, carefully laid-out cooperative village established in 1921 on what was then swamp land in the Valley of Esdraelon



A group of typical Palestinian children in the communal village of Ginagar, near the site of the largest afforestation project in the country, the Balfour Forest planted by the Jewish National Fund



Mishmar Hasharon in the Valley of Hefer as it looked when first settled in 1936



A Jewish farmer plants the first seeds in soil turned for the first time in centuries



A Tel-Aviv elementary school with ch...



Mishmar Hasharon ten years later, in 1946, a flourishing farm village



Characteristic modern architecture



This mother and child have just been brought back to Palestine from Cyprus where they were deported as "illegal" immigrants



At the foundation in the fall of 1946 of a Galilean village for veterans of the Jewish Brigade, the new settlers were greeted by the sheikh of the neighboring Arab village



Precision workers in a diamond cutting plant, one of Jewish Palestine's many new industries

which is to meet in the fall of 1947. In the meantime the Palestine issue is to remain in the present lamentable *status quo*, with a tiny trickle of immigration. The 100,00 are still to languish in the displaced persons' centers—despite President Truman's earnest and repeated requests for their transference to Palestine.

### **What is meant by a Jewish Commonwealth?**

A statement issued by the Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency on Nov. 4, 1944 declared: "The Jewish Commonwealth was not conceived as an exclusively Jewish state. It was realized that a considerable section of the population will not be Jewish by race or religion. The Commonwealth is to be designated Jewish because it is intended to be the national home of the Jewish people and to that end will be open to any Jews desiring to settle in Palestine, this function being indeed its principal *raison d'être*."

The Jewish Agency for Palestine enumerates the following provisions designed to safeguard equality of rights for individuals and communities:

- (1) The status of citizens who are non-Jews would be exactly the same as that of Jews, all being subject to identical laws administered by a democratically elected government.
- (2) Wide measures for local self-government in urban, suburban and rural areas would be introduced. In addition, Moslems and Christians would enjoy full communal autonomy as regards management of their religious, educational, and social institutions.
- (3) Universal suffrage would be enacted without distinction of race or creed. All citizens would be entitled to representation in legislative and executive bodies, and non-Jews as well as Jews would be eligible for ministerial posts.
- (4) The religious rights of non-Jewish residents and pilgrims would be safeguarded by constitutional guarantees in all matters such as freedom of worship, maintenance of educational and charitable institutions, family law and personal status.

- (5) Moslem holy places would be administered by Moslems; Christian holy places by Christians. The existing religious courts of Moslems and of the several Christian communities would continue to exercise the same jurisdiction as at present.

The Jewish Commonwealth, as Zionists understand it, would not rest content with establishing merely formal equality, but would endeavor to bring about an increasing measure of real equality in education and standard of life by social legislation and economic development.

### ***Won't a Jewish Palestine impose a sacrifice on the Arabs?***

The Arabs have vast territories—more than a million square miles—a great part of them habitable and capable of development. The Jews have none. Out of the last war the Arabs gained freedom and independence, as the result, in part, of the insistence of the United States which urged justice for the Arabs, even as it urged justice for the Jews.

The Peel Commission in 1937 offered this testimony:

It is difficult to detect any deterioration in the economic position of the Arab upper class. . . . We are also of the opinion that until now the Arab population has benefited on the whole from the work of the British Administration and from the presence of the Jews in the country. . . . Wages have gone up. The standard of living has improved. . . . The large import of Jewish capital into Palestine has had a general fructifying effect upon the economic life of the whole country.

Malcolm MacDonald, one of the principal authors of the Chamberlain-MacDonald White Paper of 1939, had this to say about Jewish benefits to Arabs in Palestine:

The Arabs cannot say that the Jews are driving them out of their country. If not a single Jew had come to Palestine after 1918, I believe that the Arab population of Palestine today would still have been round about the 600,000 figure (instead of over 1,000,000 as at present in 1938), at which it had been stable under the Turkish rule. It is because the Jews who have come to Palestine bring modern health services and other advantages that

Arab men and women who would have been dead are alive today, that Arab children who would never have drawn breath have been born and grow strong.

For the Arabs to permit a Jewish State in Palestine involves no sacrifice to the Arabs; on the contrary, it provides them with a progressive and democratic neighbor eager to create a joint future in which the hopes of both peoples may be realized.

### ***What is the major obstacle to the Zionist goal?***

The crux of the problem is power politics: Britain's desire to retain her precarious hold over the Middle East and its oil deposits vs. Russia's expansionist ambitions in that strategic sector of the earth's surface. To keep Russia out, Britain is attempting to league herself with the feudal Arab rulers who constitute the Arab League and whose intense fear of Communism is grounded in the obvious threat it presents to their own vested interests. The progressivism of Zionism makes it suspect in the eyes of these potentates. Therefore Britain hopes that her anti-Zionist policy will strengthen her relationship with the Arab League. Jewish needs and rights are disregarded, as is the very pertinent fact—made clear during the War and now by the failure of Anglo-Egyptian treaty negotiations—that the Arabs cordially dislike the British. It is the path of folly for Britain to build her future in the Middle East on Arab friendship. Thus she is not only breaking her word to the Jews but signing her own death warrant in the Mediterranean.

### ***Why is the United States involved in this Palestine problem?***

The United States is impelled by the moral imperative of its own history to seek justice wherever grave injustice is done. But we are also driven by specific political responsibilities with regard to Palestine. The United States is officially committed to the Zionist program. President Wilson was a co-author of the Balfour Declaration. The United States signed a separate convention in 1924 to approve the mandate. Every president, from Wilson to Truman, has ex-

pressed himself in favor of the Zionist objective. In 1944 both major political parties called for a Jewish State. Congress has twice placed itself on record as being in accord with Zionist aspirations, once in 1922 by a joint resolution and again in December 1945 through a concurrent resolution. The United States has more recently assumed direct responsibility through accepting membership in the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry on Palestine and in the Joint Cabinet Committee appointed by President Truman to put the recommendations into effect.

Furthermore, in this shrinking world the United States is deeply concerned with developments in all areas. We know that world peace and real unity cannot be achieved if large sections of the earth remain undeveloped, feudal in their economy and medieval in their social structure. To most careful American observers, including the American members of the Anglo-American Committee, the full development of the democratic Jewish community of Palestine seems the best—if not the only—method for bringing genuine economic and social democracy to the Middle East. The power of Palestine Jewry's example has already been responsible for advances among the Arabs of Palestine. If this process of peaceful "inoculation" is allowed to go on, we have the best guarantee against violent reaction in the form of communism in the Middle East.

### ***Did not the King-Crane Commission recommend an anti-Zionist policy for America?***

The report of the King-Crane Commission, dispatched by President Wilson in the spring of 1919 to study the problem of Middle East mandates, is sometimes cited as indicating a revision in American Government policy on Palestine. Dr. Henry Churchill King was President of Oberlin College and had directed the religious work of the Y.M.C.A. in France during the war. Charles R. Crane was a member of a Chicago firm of manufacturers of plumbing valves and fixtures. He is reputed to have been the dominating figure on the Commission and was known to be anti-Semitic as well as anti-Zionist. (Ambassador Dodd in his *Diary* said of him: "Jews

are anathema to him and he hopes to see them put in their place. His advice to me was, of course: 'Let Hitler have his way.' ”)

The status of the commission was questionable. Its investigation was hasty and admittedly conducted in an atmosphere of intrigue. Two of the three experts on the commission disagreed with its conclusions, which were in any case, impracticable. Professor William Ernest Hocking has called it a “bootless commission,” and has described its work in Syria as “mischievous.”

The King-Crane report was delivered to the American delegation in Paris in its closing days and was never acted upon. That it had no effect on American policy is evidenced by the fact that the Sixty-seventh Congress in 1922 unanimously passed a joint resolution of the House and Senate favoring the establishment of a National Home for the Jewish people in terms of the Balfour Declaration. Moreover, the Anglo-American Convention of 1924 consented to the administration of Palestine by His Britannic Majesty in accordance with the terms of the Mandate, which was recited in full.

### ***Why doesn't the United States accept more Jewish immigration?***

We certainly should accept more displaced persons on our immigration quota, for the present allotment is abysmally small. But even if we were able to pass legislation to this effect (which is at present extremely unlikely), we would not thereby satisfy the intense urge for a Jewish national life of their own felt by the great majority of displaced Jews and by hundreds of thousands, indeed, millions, of other Jews in many lands. We would be further dispersing Jews, though the tragic history of the last few years should have gone far to demonstrate the validity of the Zionist conviction that the most fundamental cure for anti-Semitism is the normalization of the status of the Jews. This can be achieved only by establishing that which they alone among national groups lack—a national homeland to which they can go as of right, as the Balfour Declaration envisaged.

Admitting more Jewish immigrants to America would not aid in solving the basic problem of Jewish homelessness; it would not help to fulfill the Balfour Declaration and the Mandate for Palestine. It would not bear witness to the foundations of a Jewish national existence laid in Palestine by Jewish pioneers in the last seventy years; nor would it encourage the aspirations of the Jewish people for nationhood. Talk at the present time of more Jewish immigration to America must not be allowed to delay or obscure the basic issue of Palestine.

### ***Aren't Jews themselves divided on Zionism?***

The Jewish people are not "divided" on Zionism, as is claimed by anti-Zionists. There may be differences of opinion among Jews and even among Zionists with reference to the ultimate constitutional structure for Palestine, but there is unanimity on the fundamental issue of continued large scale Jewish immigration and colonization. A preponderant majority of Jews is in favor of the official Zionist proposals for a Jewish Commonwealth. A recent Roper survey showed that approximately 80 per cent of American Jewry favor a Jewish State in Palestine; nearly 10 per cent are undecided or insufficiently informed to express an opinion; about 10 per cent are against setting up a Jewish State in Palestine or anywhere else, contending that Jews are a religious group, not a nation or a nationality. But all organized Jewish opinion is unalterably opposed to the 1939 White Paper which makes Jewish immigration subject to Arab consent and limits the right of Jews to purchase land.

### ***Won't political Zionism give all Jews a double allegiance?***

Zionism, as a movement, and Zionists, as individuals, have never considered making all the Jews of the world virtual or potential citizens of a Jewish State in Palestine. When the independent states of Ireland, Poland and Czechoslovakia were set up, their foundation did not impose Irish, Polish or Czechoslovak citizenship on natives of those countries who had become citizens of the United States.

The late Justice Louis D. Brandeis may be said to have disposed once and for all of the bugaboo of dual allegiances. He wrote:

Let no American imagine that Zionism is inconsistent with patriotism. Multiple loyalties are objectionable only if they are inconsistent. A man is a better citizen of the United States for being also a loyal citizen of his state, and of his city; for being loyal to his family, and to his profession or trade; for being loyal to his college or lodge. Every Irish-American who contributed towards advancing home rule was a better man and a better American for the sacrifice he made. Every American Jew who aids in advancing the Jewish settlement in Palestine, though he feels that neither he nor his descendants will ever live there, will likewise be a better man and a better American for doing so.

### ***Aren't Jews a religion, not a nationality? Why set up a new nation when internationalism is the desirable ideal?***

Every student of Jewish history knows that the Jewish religion is inextricably intertwined with the existence of the Jewish people. The distinctive contributions of Judaism are associated with Israel's struggle to persist as a people, while becoming the bearer of spiritual and ethical conceptions. Jewish nationhood and Jewish religion are intimately connected with the hope for restoration to Zion. Zionism in its most profound sense aims to revitalize this ancient Jewish striving for unity of the particular and universal, through bringing the Land, the People and the spiritual heritage together again. To call the Zionist movement "racist" is nothing less than a slander on one of the great political and moral ideas of our age.

Since the Renaissance nationalism has been a creative force in European history and always associated with the struggle for liberalism. It was the lever of attack against political autocracy and ecclesiastical reaction; it was the weapon of small peoples against oppressors. Like every great principle, like religion itself, nationalism can be distorted for evil purposes, as in recent times when it became

linked with reactionary forces. But Zionism has always been notably associated with the forces of progress and democracy. Jewish community life in Palestine today is organized on a democratic basis; the cooperative labor movement, which has done so much for the upbuilding of Palestine, is inspired by the ideal of the Jewish renaissance and yet at the same time is international in its outlook. The disingenuousness of the anti-Zionist attack on Jewish nationalism is revealed in the fact that those who bitterly oppose Zionism, despite its character as a liberal political force, warmly support the rising Arab nationalism which unfortunately has assumed an extreme chauvinistic form, and, as wartime and recent events have shown, is not free from fascist tendencies. It should be remembered that the "nationalism" of a small nation is defensive, while the "nationalism" of a large nation is apt to be offensive or imperialistic.

Though it is clear that a truly internationalist attitude is the consummation we all pray for, the struggles within the United Nations itself show us how far we still are from a world without nationalism and separate national organisms. The Jews, universally recognized as a distinct group, tragically penalized during the last decade for their identification as a group, should not be asked in a world of national states to retain the abnormal status of statelessness.

### ***Would a Jewish State endanger the holy places?***

Palestine, revered as a Holy Land by the three great faiths of Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, possesses many holy places which require special protection and guarantees, especially the assurance of free access. In the Mandate for Palestine there were specific provisions to safeguard those areas.

During the past quarter of a century no difficulty has been experienced in the preservation and maintenance of the holy places. The Jews of Palestine, no matter whether they were orthodox in religion or secular in their outlook, meticulously observed the stipulations of the Mandate with regard to the holy places of the various faiths. Their tragic history has taught them what it means to have houses of

worship burned, holy vessels and vestments desecrated, and the clergy violated.

From the very beginning of the modern Zionist movement the Jews have taken cognizance of the meaning of the holy places to the various religious groups. In the first outline of the Mandate which the Zionist Organization submitted to the Peace Conference on February 3, 1919, provision was made for the safeguarding and preservation of the holy places.

The official statement of the Political Secretary of the Jewish Agency in November 1944, quoted above, pledged the Jewish Commonwealth to safeguard all Christian and Moslem religious rights and holy places in Palestine.

### ***Why are so many missionaries opposed to Zionism?***

The reasons are many and complex. First of all, most missionaries do not know Jews or their accomplishments in Palestine. Too often they see Palestine through the eyes of the personnel of the Christian churches there, overly ecclesiastical minded folk who, as Dr. James G. McDonald has pointed out, think of Palestine as a picturesque Holy Land and resent its modernization. Furthermore, in places like Beirut, Aleppo or Cairo, missionaries are thrown into contact with Christian Arabs who, they hope, will "open the doors" to the Moslem world for them. This close contact with Arabs naturally affects the thinking of missionaries.

There are some outstanding exceptions among missionaries who have been in Palestine and who have returned with unprejudiced versions of what they have seen. Accurate pictures of Palestine have been given to the American people by, for instance, Professor Ralph Harlow, Reverend Wendell Phillips, Dr. Theodore Jackman, Mrs. Welthy Honsinger Fisher.

The anti-Zionism of most missionaries is bolstered by still other forces than those already mentioned. Much support for American mission institutions comes from individuals connected with large American companies which have holdings in Arab lands. A considerable portion of the endowment of mission colleges, stations, hospitals, etc., thus comes indi-

rectly from oil concessions. There is obviously a resultant desire on the part of the donors not to antagonize the Arabs lest their business relations with them be adversely affected. Actually, of course, there is little danger of such economic results since, as every student of Middle East affairs knows, Arab potentates draw a large part of their incomes from oil concessions to the United States and Britain and have no desire to lose these sums upon which they are dependent. Nevertheless the fear that a pro-Zionist policy may lead to cancellation of oil concessions by the Arabs continues to flourish in some Anglo-American circles, the objective evidence to the contrary notwithstanding.

### ***What was the official Palestine position of the British Labor Party?***

For almost three decades—from 1917 to 1945 when it came into power—the British Labor Party was consistently and understandingly pro-Zionist. It put itself on record as such at one Party conference after another in the course of those years. Its spokesmen, including Herbert Morrison and other members of the present Cabinet, denounced the Palestine White Paper of 1939 as illegal and unjustifiable, and Herbert Morrison went so far as to say: "I think it ought to be known by the House that this breach of faith, which we regret, this breach of British honor, with its policy with which we have no sympathy, is such that the least that can be said is that the Government must not expect that this is going to be automatically binding upon their successors. . . ."

In the House of Commons on March 6, 1940, the Labor Party condemned the Government's policy of restricting the transfer of Arab land to Jews. They regretted that, disregarding the expressed opinion of the Permanent Mandates Commission, and "without the authority of the Council of the League of Nations, the government had authorized the issue of regulations which discriminate unjustly against one section of the inhabitants of Palestine."

When a Report on "International Postwar Settlement" was adopted by the Annual Conference of the Labor Party in December 1944, as the war was clearly drawing to a

close, the following statement on Palestine was included and accepted along with the rest of the Report:

There is surely neither hope nor meaning in a Jewish National Home unless we are prepared to let the Jews, if they wish, enter this tiny land in such numbers as to become a majority. There was a strong case for this before the War. There is an irresistible case for it now. Let the Arabs be encouraged to move out as the Jews move in. Let them be compensated handsomely for their land, and their settlement elsewhere be carefully organized and generously financed. The Arabs have many wide territories of their own; they should not seek to exclude the Jews from this small area of Palestine. . . .”\*

In April 1945, the National Executive Committee of the Labor Party reaffirmed the policy accepted by the Annual Conference. It called upon the British Government to remove the present unjustifiable barriers on immigration, and “to win the full sympathy and support of the American and Russian Governments for the execution of this Palestinian policy.”

The Labor Party’s record on Palestine since it came into office in September 1945, is one of the most shameful betrayals in history.

### ***How can peace be brought to Palestine?***

As one who believes in democracy, I contend these steps must be taken for a just solution to the Palestine problem:

1. Speed the entry into Palestine of 100,000 Jewish refugees from Europe without any qualifying conditions.

2. Bring every possible pressure to bear on Great Britain to change its present Palestinian policy—which is a repudiation of its solemn obligations to the Jews and to fifty-two nations of the world, an affront to the President of the United States, and a rebuff to American participation in the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry.

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\*The Jewish Agency immediately made it known that the Zionists had no intention of ousting the Arabs from Palestine nor did they in any way want to encourage their displacement. Labor was going further in its Zionist plank than the Zionist leaders.

3. The trustee power or powers should promote the development of Palestine so that Jews may be given the opportunity to become a majority of the population under a constitution which would guarantee equality of rights to all the inhabitants, regardless of faith or nationality, and would provide fully for communal, cultural, and religious autonomy for the Arab section of the population and the other non-Jewish communities of Palestine.

4. Make sure that in any new constitutional arrangement for Palestine, the substantive rights of the Jewish people under the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine should be guaranteed.

5. Weed out anti-Semitic officials in the British Administration of Palestine and the British forces stationed there.

6. Apprehend that notorious war criminal, the ex-Grand Mufti of Jerusalem in his exile in Cairo, Egypt, and place him in prison where he belongs so that he will cease to be a menace to the peace of the Middle East.

7. Palestine, because of its historic and religious importance, its strategic and economic position at the crossroads of three continents, and its significance as the Jewish Homeland, must remain primarily a land of international concern. Whether Great Britain retains the trusteeship, or some other country becomes the trustee, extraordinary care must be taken to secure a genuine fulfillment of the obligations of the trustee and to prevent Palestine from continuing to be merely a pawn in the game of imperialist politics.

### **What can be read on the subject?**

The best books are *Palestine, Land of Promise*, by Walter Clay Lowdermilk; *American Policy Toward Palestine*, by Carl J. Friedrich; *To Whom Palestine?*, by Frank Gervasi; *Harvest in the Desert*, by Maurice Samuel; *Justice for My People*, by Ernst Frankenstein; *Palestine, Problem and Promise*, by Robert Nathan; *Underground to Palestine*, by I. F. Stone; *Lifeline to the Promised Land*, by Ira Hirschman; *Thieves in the Night*, by Arthur Koestler. Some of the best

pamphlets dealing with the issue are: *Palestine's Rightful Destiny*, by Sumner Welles; *Palestine, Test of Democracy*, by Eduard Lindeman; *Before the Bar of History*, by Wendell Phillips; *The Arab War Effort*, a documented account; *Reinhold Niebuhr Discusses Palestine with the British*; and *British Labor Has Another Voice*, by R. H. S. Crossman and Michael Foot. For further information, write to the American Christian Palestine Committee, 41 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y.

## *Statement of Principles*

The American Christian Palestine Committee believes that the so-called "Jewish problem" is primarily a Christian problem. As Christians we must resist and seek to destroy racial and religious discrimination. We must demand justice for the Jewish people everywhere. We must restore security and liberty wherever these have been lost. We must obtain the democratic freedoms of citizenship and the right to work for Jews who choose to remain in or return to the lands of their birth. We must safeguard their rights to restitution of property and to lives of dignity and self-respect, wherever such rights have been denied to them.

But this is not enough, as has been historically demonstrated. The basic solution which will end Jewish national homelessness—the root of most of the evils which have afflicted the Jewish people—is imperative today. We, therefore, demand the fulfillment of the clear intent and purpose of the Balfour Declaration, the League of Nations Mandate for Palestine, and of the 1924 Convention between Great Britain and the United States, all of which were designed to provide a national homeland, in the full sense of the word, for the Jewish people.

Specifically, we urge the implementation of the concurrent Congressional Resolution passed in December, 1945:

"BE IT RESOLVED, that the interest shown by the President in the solution of this problem is hereby commended and that the United States shall use its good offices with the mandatory power to the end that Palestine shall be opened for free entry of Jews into that country to the maximum of its agricultural and economic

potentialities, and that there shall be full opportunity for colonization and development, so that they may freely proceed with the upbuilding of Palestine as the Jewish national home and, in association with all elements of the population, establish Palestine as a democratic commonwealth in which all men, regardless of race or creed, shall have equal rights."

The steps to the realization of the Zionist goal are free immigration and unrestricted colonization by Jews, resulting in a Jewish majority in Palestine empowered to create the institutions of democratic government. In the Jewish national homeland thus to be established, complete separation of church and state is assured. The holy places of all religions will be fully protected under international guarantees.

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This organization combines the American Palestine Committee and the Christian Council on Palestine, and continues the work of both organizations.



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