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Truce in Palestine

After a bloody war, which began on the very day when the Jewish State of Israel was proclaimed in Tel-Aviv, a war with many thousands of Jewish as well as Arab casualties, a war fought both in the air and on land, a war which deepened in both camps the nationalistic feelings of hatred against each other, Count Bernadotte finally succeeded in bringing about a short-termed truce. Both the Jews and the Arabs reluctantly accepted the conditions proposed by the United Nations and their special envoy and conciliator, Count Bernadotte. Thus a momentary breathing spell was gained, and it is now four weeks since the guns have been silenced.

The task ahead of the United Nations, of world public opinion, and, of course, of Count Bernadotte is to convert the precarious four-week truce into a stable peace duly accepted by both nationalities destined to live together in Palestine—the Jews and the Arabs. Any attempt to force on the Arab countries a solution which they will find contrary to their national wellbeing and to their enhanced sense of national pride and self-assertion, even if such a solution could be found, will only further arouse the enflamed feelings of the hundreds of millions of Arabs and Moslems throughout the world. Such a state of affairs will only drive deeper the sensation of hatred against the Jews and will nullify all hope of future peaceful

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cooperation between the inhabitants of Palestine. The same is true of the other camp: To force upon the Jews a solution which will be contrary to their longing for undisturbed economic and cultural-national advancement will never succeed in bridling the rightful aspirations of the Jewish community in Palestine. Between the narrow walls of the clashing nationalistic interests of the Arabs and the Jews there is insufficient space left for Count Bernadotte and democratic public opinion behind him to find the real solution and establish a real peace in Palestine. Unless world public opinion will impell both the Zionists and the Arabs, to come to their senses, the difficulties in establishing a real peace will continually increase.

Unfortunately there is little hope of such a development in the near future. Though the number of

the Palestine Jews, even including all potential new settlers, cannot but remain a small fraction of the Jewish population throughout the world, there is no sign yet that the 90% of the Jews outside Palestine are prepared to perform so useful a service as far as the Zionists are concerned. Thus far, only a small minority of the Jews, prominently the Jewish Socialists under the *Bund* banner, demand as powerfully as only possible to immediately stop the war, to put an end to the Palestine bloodshed and to the destruction of material achievements brought about by work and contributions of many Jewish generations. The Jewish Socialist faction alone among the Jews refuses to regard independent statesmanship as a panacea for Jewish suffering. Neither a separate Jewish State in Palestine, nor these or other boundaries of such a state, nor, for that matter, territorial aggrandizement, are worth the sacrifice of Jewish youth and Jewish life.

No matter what outcome a prolonged war might bring—the losers, in the long run, can only be the Palestine Jews. Time and numbers are working for the Arabs. Hatred toward the Jews, deeply rooted in their communities, will grow poisoned fruits, which will cut off the State of Israel, impoverished and devastated by war, from peaceful cooperation with the neighboring states, and thus render any advancement in the future impossible.

The only things the Jews in Palestine really need are internal and international guarantees for their future national and cultural advancement. This can and should be obtained in a common, democratic, independent Palestine state, in which neither the Arabs nor the Jews will be in a position to force their will upon one another or to deny to each other the fulfillment of their rightful aspirations. Only on this basis can a truly lasting peace between the Jews and the Arabs be established, a peace beneficial to both nations which will further their mutual understanding and their common work for the well-being of all citizens of Palestine. Any other solution, we are convinced, will turn out to be but an armed truce terminated by more or less prolonged bloody clashes.

We Jewish Socialists demand strongly that the war be stopped and that a peaceful solution of the Arab-Jewish difficulties be earnestly worked out. Invisible walls of nationalistic and chauvinistic hatreds bar our voice from permeating the Jewish communities today. Nevertheless, peace between the Arabs and the Jews must be obtained.—Ours is the voice of the future.

To disregard our voice demanding the immediate stoppage of the war means to disregard the future of the Jewish community in Palestine. We hope against hope that this final calamity will be avoided.
